



**(SELF-)DOCUMENTATION OF THAI COMMUNITIES:
DOES THE WESTERN 'COMMUNITY ARCHIVE'
MOVEMENT PROVIDE A MODEL?**

**Thesis submitted in accordance with the requirements of the University of Liverpool for
the degree of Doctor of Philosophy by**

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ABSTRACT

Community archives, a phenomenon that developed out of the 1960s – 1970s civil rights and social justice movements, came to the attention of Western archival academia in the 1990s. Discussion of the phenomenon focused on relationships between the mainstream archives and the community practitioners and a range of subjects in archival studies. Despite the growth of the community archives movement in the context of post-colonial countries in the West, literature suggests that this particular concept has not been hitherto recognised by communities in Thailand. Therefore, this thesis seeks to examine this concept via the Western literature as the basis for further investigation of the community-based heritage activities of the four case studies in the North-eastern (Isan) communities in order to examine the commonalities and differences between the findings from the Western literature and the field research, to identify whether the theoretical and practical models of Western community archives are helpful and applicable to the Thai community heritage activities.

The research used qualitative methodologies with a case study approach, including semi-structured interviews, observation, and photographic recording to gain data from the field research. Eighteen interviewees were recruited based on their relevant roles in the communities, including religious and spiritual leaders, members of communities that led or participated in heritage activities, an individual collector, and organisation founders, as well as visitors to the repositories and the audience at community public events.

Discussion of research findings is divided into the three main themes that emerged from the field data: motivation, provenance and sustainability. The main conclusions drawn from this research are that, first, the Thai communities focus on saving their heritage from devaluation and neglect rather than trying to fill a perceived gap in mainstream collections, a motivation often found in the relationship between mainstream and community archives suggested by the Western literature. Second, members of communities relied heavily on their leaders and the study revealed the risk to the community archives of over-dependency on individuals; and, despite the evidence that community members had positive views on volunteering, the cooperation from volunteers was primarily driven by the dedication and commitment of the leaders. Third, tangible and intangible heritage in Thai community archives are intertwined and both form important elements in community memory and identity, which the community

sees as valuable to preserve and pass on to future generations. Fourth, community archives that are accepted by the Thai community as being a good representation of their heritage tend to be established in community spaces, with the exception of a formal organisation where the space is separated from the communities being represented which, as a consequence, became rather disadvantageous for the organisation. Fifth, ethnic provenance plays a significant part in heritage documentation in Thai communities, especially in the Isan region, where there is a diversity of ethnicity and the majority share similar cultures across the borders with neighbouring countries. Lastly, community archiving practices in Thailand are shown to be affected by their cultural context.

This research argues that there are sufficient commonalities between the Western literature and the research findings for each to inform the other. At the same time, the findings from the four case studies have offered some alternative perspectives which can further develop mainstream (and Western) professionals' understanding of the range, variety and meaning of archival practices in a community context. It is possible to understand the Thai case studies as 'community archives' but care should be taken not to assume that they share all the same features as Western examples of the genre. Moreover, particular resonances in literature dealing with less 'Westernised' examples have been suggested by Western scholarship; nevertheless, it should be re-emphasised that care should be taken not to create an artificial binary of 'Western' and 'non-Western' community archives.

Keywords: community archives, community-based archives, independent archives, Thai heritage activities, Thai community learning centre

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LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

AEC	The ASEAN Economic Community
AFC	The American Folklife Center
AHRC	The Arts and Humanities Research Council
ASEAN	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
ATF	The Archives Task Force, United Kingdom
BE	Buddhist Era
CAHG	The Community Archives and Heritage Group, United Kingdom
CE	Christian/Common Era
CMS	Content Management System
HLF	The Heritage Lottery Fund, United Kingdom
ICH	Intangible Cultural Heritage
ICT	Information and communications technology
JANM	Japanese American National Museum
Lao PDR	Lao People's Democratic Republic
LC	The Library of Congress
MCH	The Maasai Cultural Heritage Foundation
NESDP	The National Economic and Social Development Plan, Thailand
NFE	Non-formal Education
NGOs	Non-governmental organisations
NRAM	National Register of Archives and Manuscripts, New Zealand
NZ	New Zealand
PhD	Doctor of Philosophy
PTK	Phi Ta Khon
SAA	The Society of American Archivists
SAC	The Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn Anthropology Centre
TK	The Traditional Knowledge Division
UK	United Kingdom
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
USA	United States of America
VIA	The Voice, Identity, Activism (a community-centric framework for approaching archives and recordkeeping)

WIPO	World Intellectual Property Organisation
WWII	Second World War

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

"Krun Man Thueng Yamm Kumm Hai Kued Humm Nai Cong
Tueng Yamm Laeng Hai Kued Trong in Heet
Heet Bab Buuhan Tao Yaa Si Lai
Yaa Li Lai Luem Kaeo Paeng Tung Tae Puu
Khong Kao Tao Puu Fuem Yaa Luem Timm Bo Kwan Tae Lao"¹

[When the night falls should you consider about the Cong
In the evening should you reflect on the Heet
The inherited Heet from our ancestors must not be forgotten
Precious gem passed from our ancestors must not be forgotten
Our tradition from older generations, grandfather Fuem, should not be neglected, that is true
- Researcher's translation]

The above quotation is an excerpt from an Isan proverb, also known as 'Phaya', the means of knowledge transmission which is normally composed in a rhetorical style aiming to transfer local wisdom of Isan ideology originally via oral tradition.² The extract reveals both the significance of the 12-month tradition, Heet 12 Cong 14, to Isan identity and the importance to Isan people of passing it on as an inheritance across the generations, and indicates its value as a 'precious gem' not to be forgotten, all concepts redolent of archival practice. In this thesis, the importance of this particular tradition will form a running theme, based on literature and research findings, as it has informed the philosophy and morality of Isan lifestyles and was both the subject of and inspiration for many of the heritage documentation practices of the communities in this particular region, which this present research aims to explore.

¹ Surimas, T. 2014. *Dynamic use of Pha-ya as an instrument for promoting socialization* (Bangkok: Chulalongkorn University), p.151. Further information about Phaya can be found at Sansak, K., S. Lamduan, and S. Champadaeng. 2014. 'Traditional Isan literature and its influence on everyday society', *Asian Culture and History*, 6:2, pp.87-96

² Concrete, S. 2005. *An analysis on "Phaya" from a radio programme* (Bangkok: Silpakorn University), p.30

This chapter introduces the thesis contents to establish understanding of: the definitions of documentation and heritage, value of self-documentation and management by the communities (including sensitivity of indigenous peoples' data and the need for a culturally sensitive archival practices), why this question is relevant for heritage professionals in Thailand, and problems of importing Western concepts.

1.1 DEFINITIONS OF DOCUMENTATION AND HERITAGE

In the field of museum management, 'documentation' involves all recorded information about the items that a museum holds and it includes activities of collecting, writing down and storing such information, whilst the documentation or recorded information itself can support the work of museum staff to manage, understand, interpret and use the museum's collections.³

There are several reasons for documentation and they are normally supported by the purposes or the need for documenting. For instance, Hauptman suggests that there are six documentation purposes: 1) acknowledgement, 2) attribution, 3) tracing, 4) validation, 5) protection against accusations of misconduct, and 6) tangential substantive commentary.⁴

In archival terms, 'documentation' as defined in A Glossary of Archival and Records Terminology [hereafter SAA Glossary] is a form of noun that could have three meanings, described as follows:

1. **Materials** created or collected to provide facts for reference, especially when created to substantiate decisions, actions, or events.
2. **Citations**, including footnotes, endnotes, bibliographies, and similar devices that indicate an author's sources.
3. Computing – **Instructions**, specifications, and other descriptive information relating to the installation and use of hardware, software, systems, or files.⁵

³ Harrison, M. and G. McKenna. 2008. *Documentation: a practical guide* (Cambridge: Collections Trust)

⁴ Hauptman, R. 2008. *Documentation: a history and critique of attribution, commentary, glosses, marginalia, notes, bibliographies, works-cited lists, and citation indexing and analysis* (London: McFarland & Co.)

⁵ Pearce-Moses, R. 2005. *A Glossary of Archival and Records Terminology: documentation* (Chicago: Society of American Archivists)

Based on the interpretation of the above-given definition, it could be understood that ‘documentation’ is created as evidence to account for actions and is produced by individuals or a group, and that documentation is likely to be referred to as a form of justification.

Moreover, the attached note to the above definition of ‘documentation’ provides that “documentation may be in any format, including text, photographs, moving images, or sound”⁶, which could make the definition more comprehensive. However, it seems the meaning of ‘any format’ only relates to collections of ‘static’ (or fixed) documentation, as, even though moving images and sound are visual and aural materials, they are nevertheless the results of capturing and transforming mobility into static records.

On the other hand, other related terms provided by the SAA Glossary, including ‘adequacy of documentation’ and ‘documentation strategy’, seem rather more appropriate for further discussion in this section since they imply the relationship of all related terms to ‘documentation’, which could provide better understanding about the development of the terms in association with the archival field.

According to the SAA Glossary, definitions of ‘adequacy of documentation’ and ‘documentation strategy’ are provided as follows:

adequacy of documentation (n.) Practices to ensure that sufficient, reliable records are kept to provide information about the organization, functions, policies, decisions, procedures, and essential transactions and to capture information necessary to protect the legal and financial rights of the government and of organizations and persons directly affected by the agency's activities.⁷

documentation strategy (n.) A methodology that guides selection and assures retention of adequate information about a specific geographic area, a topic, a process, or an event that has been dispersed throughout society.⁸

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ Pearce-Moses, R. 2005. *A Glossary of Archival and Records Terminology: adequacy of documentation* (Chicago: Society of American Archivists)

⁸ ---2005. *A Glossary of Archival and Records Terminology: documentation strategy* (Chicago: Society of American Archivists)

The literature review suggests that, although the term ‘documentation’ has constantly been used in a variety of aspects, it seems that the term is rather taken for granted because of its convenience, whereas the term ‘documentation strategy’ has been of greater interest to archival and records scholars, especially since 1984 after it was initially defined at the Society of American Archivists’ meeting. Furthermore, the origin of the concept was assumed to be driven by the social movements taking place in the USA in the early to mid-1970s that had influenced some groups of archivists to begin to collect records from different social groups in the hope of ensuring full social representation.⁹

In line with the critical situation within American society in the 1970s, as has previously been mentioned, some archival professionals such as Helen Samuels actively responded to the social phenomenon and made greater efforts to introduce the concept of ‘documentation strategy’ to the community of archival professionals in order that it could act as guidance for institutional archives. The aim was to ensure that records representing each state from a variety of social domains – based on advice from experts in different areas such as farming and performing arts – would be safely preserved by the institutional archives. According to her suggestion, the definition of ‘documentation strategy’ is “a plan formulated to assure the documentation of an ongoing issue, activity, or geographic area”.¹⁰ As she explained in the same article, a documentation strategy consists of four activities: first, choosing and defining the topics to be documented; second, identifying advisors and the site for the strategy; third, organising the inquiry and inspecting the form and substance of the available documentation; and, fourth, selecting and placing the documentation.¹¹

Even though the concept had the potential to be beneficial for the society as a whole, the main criticism of it seemed to be the challenges in coping with processes involving a number of experts from different social domains, as reflected in an article by Larry Hackman. He was one of the very first people, including Samuels, who actively supported the concept;

⁹ Cox, R. 1990. *American Archival Analysis: The Recent Development of the Archival Profession in the United States* ([n.p.]: Scarecrow) in Pearce-Moses, R. 2005. *A Glossary of Archival and Records Terminology: documentation strategy* (Chicago: Society of American Archivists)

¹⁰ Samuels, H.W. 1986. *Who Controls the Past* (Chicago: Society of American Archivists), p.115

¹¹ Ibid., p.116

however, two decades after its introduction, he found that it had still not achieved nationwide acceptance and use.¹²

It is necessary to note that the development of the ‘documentation strategy’ concept predated professional discussion of ‘community archives’, which started to interest archival scholars in the 1990s.¹³ Nevertheless, the literature review suggests that these two concepts share the same origin, derived from the 1960s – 1970s social movements. However, although originating from the same phenomenon of social injustice and deriving from similar views about safeguarding the heritage of different groups within society, there appear to be significant differences between the two concepts. The ‘documentation strategy’ approached the problems from a top-down point of view which envisioned collecting being undertaken by professionals, informed by experts, to enrich institutional repositories, whereas the ‘community archive’ concept was derived from the bottom-up approach that tends to emphasise community engagement in decision making about their heritage and often (but not always) involves community custody of collections. It is beyond the scope of this section to include further discussion of the development of the ‘community archive’ concept; however, it will be explored more in Chapter 3: The Community Archives Movement.

Even though the concept of ‘documentation’ and the related ones mentioned above seem limited in terms of practical implication, it is arguable that the conceptual principle is a good one. Having considered the provided definitions of the terms ‘adequacy of documentation’ and ‘documentation strategy’, the ideas behind the aims of these two terms seem to promise good methods not only for institutional archivists but also for community members who need guidance in safeguarding their community heritage as well. This is because ‘documentation strategy’ is a broader term for a methodology to select and assure adequate information is dispersed for retention throughout society; and ‘adequacy of documentation’ focuses on the communities as the ‘experts’ who decide on the significant properties of their community that need to be recorded. The value of documentation as a concept is that it goes beyond heritage. Heritage is usually considered to involve what already exists, whereas documentation can involve the creation of new records.

¹² Hackman, L. 2009. 'The Origins of Documentation Strategies in Context: Recollections and Reflections', *American Archivist*, 72, pp.436-459

¹³ Community archives already existed but were not the subject of discussion by professional archivists

In addition to the definition of ‘documentation’ and its relevant terms that has been discussed above, it is also necessary to devote more paragraphs of this section to discussing ‘heritage’. The term ‘heritage’ has different focuses for different disciplines; thus, it could refer to ancient sites for archaeologists, ancient artefacts for museologists, languages and dialects for linguists, rituals or ceremonies for anthropologists, sociologists and culturalists, and the archival materials for archivists and so on. Underpinning all these different forms of heritage, however, is a shared characteristic of being something that originated in the past and which has been handed down to and is valued by people in the present. Rodney Harrison divides heritage into two types, which are official and unofficial heritage. Official heritage often refers to that under management and conservation by the state (often covered by legislation), whereas unofficial heritage refers to the objects, places and practices that are not recognised by or registered with the government but instead are cared for by the communities and which have more meaning and significant values for the community members.¹⁴

Besides official and unofficial perspectives, UNESCO offers an alternative binary; that is, tangible and intangible heritage. UNESCO has not provided a definition of tangible heritage, but Susie West suggests the meaning that it is the “physical heritage, such as buildings and objects, *as opposed to intangible heritage*”¹⁵ (italics added). Intangible heritage is identified as the abstract cultural phenomena that have significance to the lives of communities.

Definitions of intangible heritage include the following examples:

Something considered to be a part of heritage that is not a physical object or place, such as a memory, a tradition or a cultural practice, *as opposed to tangible heritage*. (italics added)¹⁶

Intangible cultural heritage is the practices, expressions, knowledge and skills that communities, groups and sometimes individuals recognise as part of their cultural heritage. Also called living cultural heritage, it is usually expressed in one of the following forms: oral traditions; performing arts; social practices, rituals and festive

¹⁴ Harrison, R. 2010. 'Heritage as social action', in West, S. (ed.) *Understanding heritage in practice* (Manchester: Manchester University Press in association with the Open University), pp. 240-276

¹⁵ West, S. (ed.). 2010. *Understanding heritage in practice* (Manchester: Manchester University Press in association with the Open University), p.316

¹⁶ Ibid., p.314

events; knowledge and practices concerning nature and the universe; and traditional craftsmanship.¹⁷

It is noticeable that the latter definition, which is provided by the UNESCO World Heritage Centre, has combined the words ‘cultural’ and ‘heritage’ to emphasise the human influence in the creation of intangible heritage, just as West suggests in a definition of ‘cultural heritage’ for an “object, place or practice of heritage that is of human origin. The term is often used by way of contrast with natural heritage.”¹⁸

Both the concepts of tangible and intangible heritage are relevant; however, this research will suggest that their binary opposition, as in the definitions by West, is not necessarily helpful. Even contrasts between human and natural heritage are not necessarily helpful, as the value attributed to natural heritage is a human creation. Although not discussed in the present thesis, ‘natural heritage’ can be significant for Thai community identity, as in the elephant village visited during ‘Phase One’. Additionally, it should be noted that intangible heritage is particularly important in Thailand because literacy was previously limited, most traditional education being, as already noted, in terms of oral communication of cultural traditions.

There is a recent sign of movement in Thailand towards safeguarding the intangible heritage in that a draft of the Thailand Intangible Cultural Heritage Act has been an ongoing process and the relevant committee’s latest conference took place on 21 December 2015. This draft is particularly driven by UNESCO’s adoption of the Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH).¹⁹ In relation to UNESCO’s convention for safeguarding the ICH, it may be presumed that, if the draft of the Intangible Cultural Heritage Regulation of Thailand is passed, this regulation would have a great impact on community-based management of their heritage activities since the regulation would support the inventorying of a community’s valuable heritage in order for it to be preserved not only for the locals but for all Thai citizens.

¹⁷ UNESCO World Heritage Centre. 2016. *Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ): Intangible heritage* (UNESCO World Heritage Centre)

¹⁸ West, S. (ed.). 2010. *Understanding heritage in practice* (Manchester: Manchester University Press in association with the Open University), p.313

¹⁹ Select Committee for a Draft of the Thailand Intangible Cultural Heritage Act. 2015. *A report of the select committee for a draft of Thailand Intangible Cultural Heritage Act [Year](reconsidering)* (Bangkok: The Secretariat of The Senate)

1.2 VALUE OF SELF-DOCUMENTATION AND MANAGEMENT BY THE COMMUNITIES

In some countries, especially those with a colonial past, there has been discussion related to post-colonial impacts in a number of study areas including recordkeeping. For instance, Jeannette Bastian, many of whose articles discuss the impact of post-colonialism, argues that it requires traditional archivists to reconsider their roles and the meaning of the records to be preserved for the overall society, rather than concentrating on public archives – which had been the focus of archival concepts since their original formation.²⁰ This shifting paradigm of archival discourse occurred mainly because archival scholars became aware of the records that had been excluded from the public domain, such as those of oppressed or marginalised communities and identities. Moreover, Bastian also encouraged the conventional archivists to rethink the meaning of the term ‘archive’ so that records that fall outside of its static meaning – such as intangible heritage or cultural representations of communities – could be part of the ‘archive’ of society as a whole. Therefore, Bastian has promoted concepts such as ‘post-colonial archives’, ‘cultural archives’ and ‘collective memory’ in order to help broaden the term ‘archive’ and enable the inclusion of community identities either within or alongside traditional archives.

From the above discussion of intangible heritage and its relevance to Thailand, it is clear that Bastian’s arguments are significant for defining Thai archival heritage. Moreover, although the examples of Bastian’s case studies are derived from a Western post-colonial viewpoint, her argument could arguably be made in connection to the context of Thailand where the previous argument regarding the background of Thai communities has suggested that the nation-building could be a kind of colonialism in the form of ‘internal colonialism’, especially in the case of the Isan region. As already discussed, the impact of ‘internal colonialism’ had substantially resulted in the marginalisation of Isan people in that their identities were subordinated by the mainstream national culture, in a manner described by

²⁰ Bastian, J.A. 2009. 'Play mas': carnival in the archives and the archives in carnival: records and community identity in the US Virgin Islands', *Archival Science*, 9, pp.113-125; ---2013. 'The records of memory, the archives of identity: Celebrations, texts and archival sensibilities', *Archival Science*, 13, pp.121-131; ---2014. 'Documenting communities through the lens of collective memory ', in Daniel, D., and A. Levi (eds.) *Identity Palimpsests: Archiving Ethnicity in the U.S. and Canada* (Sacramento, CA, USA: Litwin Books), pp.15-33

Michelle Caswell, another Western post-colonial archival theorist, as ‘symbolic annihilation’.²¹

In terms of expressions of Isan lifestyles, the people could convey them in a variety of characteristics, according to Charuwan Thammawat, including languages, norms, traditions, arts, handicrafts, medicines, ceremonies, agricultures, performances, songs and music, and these characteristics are unique to the identifies of the people of Isan and the locality.²² Moreover, in terms of the means for knowledge transfer used by Isan people, this will depend on the type of content and who are the audience. However, the most frequent means are storytelling, ritual celebrations and performances. Thammawat also points out that religious and spiritual faith and belief play a highly significant role in every method. In other words, faith and belief could be the most influential factors in relation to whether local knowledge or wisdom is successfully transferred.

Oral tradition is a more important communicative channel than writing for local and traditional knowledge transfer throughout Thailand, including the Isan region. This is because literacy was limited to royalty, elites and monks. Men would be more literate than women because of their different social functions in Thailand: until recently, men would work to provide for their families whereas women would take care of the household chores and raise the children. When the boys were old enough to study, they would be sent to be educated by monks at the temples. Therefore, home and temple had a very strong relationship. Since – until the establishment of schools by the Thai central government – formal education mainly took place in temples, the monks took the role of community scholars who would have knowledge about both cosmology and religion. They would record information such as herbal remedies, relevant rituals and ceremonies for the communities, myths, and poetry by inscribing it on palm leaves, which later became the palmleaf manuscripts kept in some temples until nowadays. The palmleaf manuscripts are examples of written records available in the Thai communities and passed from older to younger generations. Apart from the palmleaf records, most forms of knowledge transfer were by intangible means.

²¹ Caswell, M., M. Cifor, and M.H. Ramirez. 2016. "'To Suddenly Discover Yourself Existing': Uncovering the Impact of Community Archives", *American Archivist*, 79, pp.56-81

²² Thammawat, C. 1988. 'Kan tai tod phum panya puen ban Isan [*Transferring of local wisdom*]', in Phongphit, S. (ed.) *Thit thang mu ban Thai: Collected articles on village life in Thailand* (Bangkok: Village Foundation), pp. 58-71

The customary practices of the ‘Heet 12 Cong 14’, which will be mentioned in the next chapter (pages 36 - 37), have been passed on from generation to generation by verbal communication and somatic transfer of skills, rather than relying on any written records for guidance. The explicit means for transferring relevant knowledge and practices for the traditions are mainly via oral tradition. Community archives discourse recognises the value of oral traditions through the practice of recording oral histories but this has not been found to be common practice in Thailand.²³

Tangible and intangible heritage are thus both means for community members to create a sense of belonging through the linking of heritage with the past and with other community members sharing the same heritage in order to create and share understanding about their present and future. Furthermore, the concept of ‘collective memory’ supports Bastian’s reconfiguration of archive to include those cultural forms that have identity value for a specific group, whether tangible or intangible. Thus, in the Isan context, this main inherited ‘local wisdom or intellect’ [Phum panya], a term which could be synonymous with the expanded conception of archive, includes oral traditions, religious ceremonies, performances or local belief systems.

1.2.1 SENSITIVITY OF INDIGENOUS PEOPLES’ DATA

In 1997, the Master Plan for Conservation and Development of Krung Rattanakosin, the outer and inner areas of old town Bangkok, was released and the project has been a lengthy one until nowadays, since it was involved with changes in vista that had considerable impacts on the long-term residents who had resided in the areas for generations. The problems were complicated, as discussed in Wimonrart Issarathumnoon and Yukio Nishimura, and that led to results that were partly successful and partly unsuccessful, according to the original plan.²⁴ In addition to their studies, another study highlighted project-related issues that affected two particular communities, Tha Tian and Mahakan, mainly because the community members had only a minor voice in relation to the heritage of the old town area of Bangkok, despite their long-term occupancy, since they did not have legal rights over the properties and land. Even though the community members did not have any rights over the properties and land in

²³ Giacchino-Baker, R., and F.J. Baker. 2002. *Cultural Values in Thailand and Mexico: Oral Traditions, Folk Tales, and Proverbs East and West* (Pomona, California: California State Polytechnic University)

²⁴ Issarathumnoon, W., and Y. Nishimura. [2006]. *The implementation of conservation plans of the Rattanakosin area, Bangkok*

which they were resident, the author argued that they did have the right to their specific community's cultural heritage, as these particular two communities represented certain Bangkok lifestyles: the dried seafood trading tied with the history of river commerce for the Tha Tian community, and the birdcage-making and traditional teak houses located by a canal for the Mahakan community. It was argued that these features of intangible heritage that were being preserved by these communities belonged to their members, and so should be part of the redevelopment project driven by the Master Plan as well. The result of this study showed that the Tha Tian community was still struggling to negotiate with the government, whereas Mahakan community members seemed to have reached a satisfactory solution for keeping their heritage. They had achieved this with support from academic experts and NGO workers, who strengthened their voice against the government sector so that they could negotiate to remain in their community and conserve their lifestyle by volunteering for community caretaking, building a community learning centre and a Thai massage centre, and ensuring all sites were occupied in order to prevent new settlers entering the community.²⁵

Previous discussion has emphasised that both tangible and intangible heritage are relevant to one another in a Thai community context and the aforementioned example of the Master Plan for Krung Rattanakosin has shown the critical situation in Thailand concerning heritage 'rights', especially in relation to the tensions between the state and local communities. The communities felt that their voices were being marginalised in relation to the heritage they claimed belonged to them. This example suggests a lack of integration regarding heritage management amongst different sectors in Thailand that could increase the risk involved in preserving the nation's heritage as a whole, due to the absence of a holistic viewpoint within Thai society.

In the Western archival principle, the issues around rights in records have been significantly discussed by scholars in relation to both conventional and community archives, and they seem to have come up with a common suggestion for archival professionals to allow for the possibility of different creatorship for one record, the so-called "parallel provenance", as in

²⁵ Ho, K.C., and P. Chinnapong. 2013. 'Conserving Bangkok's premier heritage district: ambitious plans and ambitious rights', in Barry, C. (ed.) *Rights to culture: heritage, language, and community in Thailand* (Chiang Mai, Thailand: Silkworm Books), pp.59-83

Chris Hurley's term, or "pluralistic provenance", as suggested by Nathan Sowry, in order to enrich the historical context of such records as much as possible.²⁶

Hurley and Sowry discussed provenance mainly from the point of view of traditional archival professionals that urged archivists to take into account wider perspectives of the provenance context. Nevertheless, there are few studies regarding similar practice in the field of community archives, whilst Cristine Paschild's study explained through relevant challenges to pursue the contextual enhancement of archival provenance via a case study of a particular community archive, JANM – Japanese American National Museum.²⁷ Since preservation of an archival historical context means to preserve the identity of the community that the community archive is trying to serve, Paschild reminded the community archival professionals to find a balance between the attempt to preserve community identities and the core professional role of the archivist, which involves collecting, preserving, and allowing access to the archives, so that the adequacy of these practices would enable long-term usage of the community collections. This also meant that identities would be preserved at the same time. In other words, professionals responsible for community archives should pay attention to the historical aspects (identity of the community) as well as at the same time maintaining their professional role.

In relation to the point raised by Paschild that a community's identity should be taken into consideration together with archival practice to ensure the sustainability of that community's archives being sustained as an organisation to represent the community in an effective way, Guha Shankar reported the good practice of self-documentation by the Maasai community in Kenya. Shankar used this example to demonstrate that the heritage documentation should be decided on and handled by members of the indigenous community themselves, instead of them being the subjects for anthropological studies or exploitation by any individuals or organisations that did not have sufficient understanding about the heritage context of such indigenous communities. For instance, in this case, representatives of the Maasai community had proposed that external organisations have essential training on hands-on skills for

²⁶ Hurley, C. 2005. *Parallel Provenance (if these are your records, where are your stories?)* (Australia: Faculty of Information Technology, Monash University); Sowry, N. 2014. 'Viewing Subject(s) as Creator(s): The Need to Reexamine and Redescribe Civil Rights Collections for Pluralist Provenance'

²⁷ Paschild, C.N. 2012. 'Community Archives and the Limitations of Identity: Considering Discursive Impact on Material Needs', *American Archivist*, 75, pp.125-142

community heritage initiatives and sustainability. The project was a cooperation between four institutions: 1) the Maasai Cultural Heritage Foundation (MCH) – an indigenous community-based group in Kenya that was the heritage owner; 2) the Traditional Knowledge Division (TK) at the World Intellectual Property Organisation (WIPO) – an organisation that launched the Creative Heritage Project to protect the intellectual property of indigenous communities; 3) the Center for Documentary Studies at Duke University, in the US – an organisation that worked with AFC and specialised in providing hand-on instruction with digital media technologies; and 4) the American Folklife Center (AFC) at the US Library of Congress (LC) – an organisation that provided experts for essential training on ethnographic methodology, documentation techniques, and library and archival practices. As the community members suggested the areas of community heritage to be safeguarded, especially the intangible aspect, the other three organisations provided appropriate support on training and technology as well as the repository for the surrogate files of the documentation completed on the sites, along with the creation of a website to educate the public about the Maasai as well as providing guidance for other indigenous communities who may wish to learn from this project. All of this support from the external bodies could complement sustainable aspect of the project. Moreover, after the project was completed, the members of Maasai community had shown that they could manage their heritage in the way that would be the most beneficial for them as the owners of the heritage, as well as indicating that they could negotiate with tourism demands reasonably well.²⁸

Having considered the sensitivities associated with the data of indigenous people as in the above discussion, it can be seen that in the case of Thailand – for example, the Master Plan of the old town Bangkok and the context of multi-ethnicity in the Isan region – there is the need for the Thai society to work together in heritage management that would respect diversity within the society. The present draft of the constitution of the Kingdom of Thailand addresses the need for collaborative participation by communities in Thailand to safeguard the national culture. For instance, Chapter 3, Civil Rights, Section 63, states the following:

A community should have the right to protect, revive, conserve, transmit, and develop tradition, norm, culture and good intellect of the community, locality and nation as

²⁸ Shankar, G. 2010. 'From subject to producer: reframing the indigenous heritage through cultural documentation training', *International Journal of Intangible Heritage*, 5, pp.14-24

well as participate in management, maintaining and utilising natural resources, environment and cultural and biological diversity by sustainable means.²⁹

Chapter 2, Basics of State Strategic Planning, Section 83:

The state has to strengthen local communities by:

...(4) promoting and maintaining good norm, rituals, arts and culture, and intellect of communities, localities and nation

(5) protecting the indigenous and ethnic groups to maintain their identities with dignity.³⁰

Furthermore, the United Nations in its Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples also emphasises that the rights of indigenous peoples should be safeguarded; for instance:

The General Assembly,...

*Affirming also that all peoples contribute to the diversity and richness of civilizations and cultures, which constitute the common heritage of humankind, ...*³¹

Article 31

1. Indigenous peoples have the right to maintain, control, protect and develop their cultural heritage, traditional knowledge and traditional cultural expressions, as well as the manifestations of their sciences, technologies and cultures, including human and genetic resources, seeds, medicines, knowledge of the properties of fauna and flora, oral traditions, literatures, designs, sports and traditional games and visual and performing arts. They also have the right to maintain, control, protect and develop their intellectual property over such cultural heritage, traditional knowledge, and traditional cultural expressions.

2. In conjunction with indigenous peoples, States shall take effective measures to recognize and protect the exercise of these rights.³²

²⁹ Constitution Drafting Committee. 2016. *Draft Constitution of the Kingdom of Thailand, BE 2559 (2016)* (Bangkok), p.18

³⁰ Ibid., p.28

³¹ United Nations. 2008. *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People (UNDRIP)* ([n.p.]: United Nations), p.2

1.2.2 NEED FOR A CULTURALLY SENSITIVE ARCHIVAL PRACTICE

Discussion of post-colonial archives in the context of Western archival literature has included much debate about indigenous archives such as in Australia, the USA, and Canada, where indigenous people have claimed legal status for their methods of record-keeping, including artwork, songs and dances, both for the aims of achieving social equality and for restitution of lands. Such post-colonial discourse in archival studies is concentrated on countries such as Australia, concerning documenting the Aboriginal identities, and North America, to ensure sufficient representation of the Native Americans' identities. Issues of identity have been discussed by Bronwyn Carlson in her PhD project 'The politics of identity: who counts as aboriginal today?' but, as noted by Martin Nakata, powerful messages received from a number of Aboriginal Australians expressed their identity confusion in living in contemporary Australian society since the imagined indigenous identity constructed by the mainstream perception was different from that of their own perception. In other words, they experienced a loss of identity due to meanings constructed by the nation that did not correspond with what they themselves considered meaningful.³³ In addition to Nakata's discussion, a range of recent projects have shown an awareness of inequalities between indigenous and mainstream cultural representations (including archives) and the need for social inclusion, especially by archival practices. These include the Trust and Technology Project initiative of the Koorie Archiving System that embraced cooperation from the indigenous people throughout the project as discussed by Sue McKemmish and her team.³⁴ Similar to an attempt by McKemmish and her team, Michael Shepard tested the Mukurtu CMS archive platform with indigenous communities in Washington State, Alaska and California in order to find out to what extent the platform could support self-determination of the indigenous communities. The background of his study was derived from concerns about the decline of indigenous languages used in daily life and the deficiency of support in representing their cultural beliefs.³⁵ These projects have hitherto been conceived as participatory partnerships between professionals and communities, the former acting as

³² Ibid., p.11-12

³³ Carlson, B. 2011. *The politics of identity: who counts as aboriginal today?* (Kensington, Sydney: University of New South Wales); Nakata, M. 2012. 'Indigenous memory, forgetting and the archives', *Archives & Manuscripts*, 40, pp.98-105

³⁴ McKemmish, S., S. Faulkhead, and L. Russell. 2011. 'Distrust in the archive: Reconciling records', *Archival Science*, 11, pp.211-239

³⁵ Shepard, M.A.A. 2015. *The substance of self-determination: language, culture, archives and sovereignty* (Vancouver, Canada: University of British Columbia)

facilitators but – possibly – facilitating needs defined more by the professionals than independently by the communities.

It is not merely indigenous people who have found themselves misrepresented by mainstream culture. This is also the case with marginalised groups of people within the same society, also known as ‘subalterns’. For example, an article by Harrison discusses the example of a private walking tour, Jay Brown’s Brixton Walking Tour, which has represented part of Brixton’s community heritage (British African Caribbean history) in a way that the mainstream tours had not, as it had no interest in including it. In contrast with existing walking tours, Jay Brown’s tour revealed Brixton’s diverse ethnicities, going beyond the mainstream perception.³⁶ In a similar way, the Black Cultural Archives (also in Brixton) aims to collect records of black heritage excluded from mainstream collections.³⁷

Similarly, the internal colonial consequences of past government policies in Thailand which challenged expression of diverse ethnic identities specifically in the Isan region (where local languages and dialects were suppressed in favour of ‘Standard Thai’) are possibly similar to what happened to the Australian indigenous identities discussed by Nakata in that the Isan identity became subaltern. There are some studies, such as those by Mingkwan Chonpairot, Souneth Phothisane and Phra Sutdhisansophon and Supisara Prasert, Virat Pansila and On-Uma Lasunon, that discuss the challenges faced by Isan ethnicities in preserving their tradition and cultural beliefs due to the lack of support from the government domain as well as the implication of exploitation by the national promotion of ethnic tourism with insufficient plans for sustainability of the ethnic communities.³⁸ Both studies have shown the cultural richness of Isan ethnicities that represent the diversity of the Isan people, whose identities should be preserved as part of a diverse cultural citizenship of a multi-ethnic and multi-identity Thai nation. Nevertheless, neither study has investigated the archival aspects of the ethnic community heritage as yet, which it is the aim of the present study to explore.

³⁶ Harrison, R. 2010. 'Heritage as social action', in West, S. (ed.) *Understanding heritage in practice* (Manchester: Manchester University Press in association with the Open University), p.270

³⁷ Black Cultural Archives. 2016. *About us*

³⁸ Chonpairot, M., S. Phothisane, and Phra Sutdhisansophon. 2009. 'Guideline for conservation, revitalization and development of the identity and customs of the Kula Ethnic group in Northeast Thailand', *Social Sciences*, 4:2, pp.167-173
Prasert, S., V. Pansila, and O. Lasunon. 2009. 'Guidelines and methods for conservation, revitalization and development of the traditions and customs of Nyah Kur Ethnic group for tourism in the province of Chaipapum in Northeast Thailand', *Social Sciences*, 4:2, pp.174-179

In addition to concepts such as collective memory, post-colonialism or cultural heritage, which were adopted into archival discourse by Bastian – as has already been discussed in another section of this chapter – in order to ensure the inclusion of the heritage of marginalised communities along with other initiatives to support the preservation and dissemination of community culture, other scholars also suggested the concepts that are more readily relatable to traditional archival concepts; that is, ‘participatory archives’ and ‘societal provenance’. Prominent scholars who introduced these concepts to the archival and recordkeeping professions include Terry Cook and Tom Nesmith.

Nesmith gave the example of records of 19th century Aboriginal–European relations in Western Canada. His main discussion indicated how important it was that the archivists considered the history of the records at an intercultural level whilst examining their provenance, especially the records of the colonial period, since neglecting to do so could lead to the failure either to identify the presence of or to create appropriate representations of indigenous peoples since most records were created by the colonisers, who may have had a misconceived perception of the indigenous lives at that time.³⁹ Cook, although working along the same lines, went further than Nesmith’s suggestions.⁴⁰ His discussion focused on the role of archival professions, in particular suggesting that conventional archivists should engage citizens with the processes of the appraisal practice to ensure more voices from the marginalised groups could be heard through the archives. He also gave an example of the Aboriginal people of the First Nations in Canada, whose culture and identity were abused and suppressed by the White colony; therefore, he emphasised that their ancestral anguished stories needed to be told and remembered. Moreover, he also pointed out from a study by Wendy Smith, who challenged the concept of ‘archiving democracy, democratizing archives’, that it could potentially be a promising concept only if the archival professions are ready to embrace the ‘democratic, inclusive, holistic archives’ into their practical realm.

³⁹ Nesmith, T. 2006. 'The concept of societal provenance and records of nineteenth-century Aboriginal-European relations in Western Canada: Implications for archival theory and practice', *Archival Science*, 6, pp.351-360

⁴⁰ Cook, T. 2011. 'We Are What We Keep; We Keep What We Are': Archival Appraisal Past, Present and Future', *Journal of the Society of Archivists*, 32, pp.173-189

1.3 WHY IS THIS QUESTION RELEVANT FOR HERITAGE PROFESSIONALS IN THAILAND?

The research question for this study is:

How do Thai communities document and preserve their heritage and to what extent is the Western concept and model of community archives appropriate to a Thai context?

The definition and background of the ‘community archive’ concept will be explored in Chapter 3, The Community Archives Movement. However, the research question clearly states the aim to examine the means by which the communities document themselves and to find out to what extent the concept of community archive would be applicable to management of Thai community heritage.

This research question was initially derived from the phenomenon of a flourishing ‘community archive’ movement in Western countries, especially in the UK, that seemed to promise support for communities in representing their identities. Primary research on studies related to archival practices or heritage documentation managed by communities in Thailand suggested little or no literature related to archival studies and no study of the relationship between archives and communities. However, there have been plenty of studies on communities in Isan which consist of a range of arenas such as history, language, cultural studies, politics, socio-economics and arts (as mentioned above). Moreover, the Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn Anthropology Centre (SAC) has carried out certain initiatives to identify sites of community cultural heritage throughout all regions in Thailand, using a local museum database, and this formed the starting point for the selection of case studies for this research.⁴¹

In addition, a quantity of previous research on Isan cultural context had demonstrated the importance of Isan heritage and most of it was based on case studies. For example, Kanchana Suanpradit, Suthuspong Oulrabutr and Bhongsatorn Bhinijwatn all studied the same community, Dan Sai in Loei province (which was also selected as one of the research case studies for this research) and the results of all three studies shared similar conclusions,

⁴¹ Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn Anthropology Centre. 2013. *Database of local museums in Thailand*

indicating that cultural activities practised by Dan Sai community members played a significant role in their lives in general, especially those aspects affected by religious and spiritual beliefs.⁴² It is probably worth noting that Oulrabutr's research focus was on the religious rituals associated with the Sri Song Rak Stupa, the central holy place of the community, and the life of community members; and Suanpradit and Bhinijwatn discussed the significance of the Phi Ta Khon performance for the cultural lifestyles of the Dan Sai community members.⁴³ Other researchers studied other cultural aspects of Isan identities such as the relationship of ethnic-produced textiles with community identity (Franco Amantea); conservation of traditional Isan-styled buildings to promote tourism (Pakorn Pattananurot); temple murals and their symbolic meanings for community identity (Pakpoom Hannapha); and the exploitation of an annual religious event for political empowerment by local politicians (Suriya Smutkupt and others).⁴⁴

In addition to the aforementioned studies that have raised awareness of the heritage value of Isan identities mainly in relation to cultural aspects, the literature review suggests that some studies seem to touch on areas covered by Western archival studies that have been discussed in the field, particularly concerning the history of records, such as in Artha Nantachukra – which appears to have been the first paper to discuss the impact of colonialism in relation to the suppression of the literature of the colonised peoples. He argued that, after the decline in power of Lan Xang kingdom, the Bangkok government had influenced and changed Isan practices of historiography, including chronicular writings, law books and literary pieces. Nevertheless, he argued that the Bangkok record-keeping practices could not erase the long-embedded traditions of Lan Xang's folklore.⁴⁵ (See also Context of Isan Provinces, pages 33 - 40) Although there was no immediate follow-up to Nantachukra's work, a later paper by

⁴² Suanpradit, K. 1990. *Phi Ta Khon: a case study of Amphoe Dansai, Changwat Loei* ([n.p.]: Srinakharinwirot University); Oulrabutr, S. 1993. *The traditions and rituals relating to Phrathat Srisongrak, Amphoe Dansai, Loei* ([n.p.]: Srinakharinwirot University); Bhinijwatn, B. 2005. *Folk arts : a case study of the phee ta khon mask at dansai district, Loei province* ([n.p.]: Srinakharinwirot University)

⁴³ More information could be found from the introduction of case studies for my research on pages 72 – 80.

⁴⁴ Amantea, F. 2007. *Dress and identity among the Black Tai of Loei province, Thailand* ([n.p.]: Simon Fraser University); Pattananurot, P. 2012. 'The Old buildings and conservation guidelines developed City area community Chiang Khan, Loei in Thailand', *Procedia Engineering*, 32, pp.1183-1190; Hannapha, P. 2010. *The integration of contemporary connotation between images and text on the mural in local Isan temples* ([Phitsanulok]: Naresuan University); Smutkupt, S., P. Kitiarsa, K. Deeburi, S. Aundaeng, and P. Srichai. 2000. *Cultural politics and the secularization of the Bun Phrawes in Roi-et Market Town* (Nakhonratchasima, Thailand: Thai Studies, Anthropological Collection, Institute of Social Technology, Suranaree University of Technology)

⁴⁵ Nantachukra, A. 1986. *Isan historiography: a study of northeastern Thailand's historiographical traditions until the beginning of the 20th century* ([n.p.]: Silpakorn University)

Benjawan Narasaj suggested that some Thai scholars had begun to express their interest in the area of collective memory affecting dominant historical narrative in relation to marginalised groups within Thai society.⁴⁶ The more recent work – and probably the one closest to the concept of ‘collective memory’ raised by Western archival scholars – was written by a Thai professional trained in both politics and anthropology, Jularat Damrongviteetham, who discussed an incident called the “Red Barrel” that happened in Lamsin, southern Thailand during 1971 – 1973. This incident was the result of the government’s violent suppression of the communist movement in the southern areas, which was not officially acknowledged until recently, albeit the traumatic memory remained with individuals in the Lamsin community. There was a particular community group called the Sinpraetong Network that was actively trying to pass on the traumatic memory to the next generations by the establishment of a Red Barrel Monument as well as arranging activities such as an annual commemoration ceremony, laying wreaths at the monument, hosting political related seminars, and putting on a concert to remember the incident. Damrongviteetham argued that through these activities the community members were attempting to write their own collective memory that challenged the national history. Nevertheless, this attempt seemed to be ignored by the state narrative of historical making that it was at risk of being forgotten and the Thai citizen would never learned from the past violence to seek peace together.⁴⁷ Although these examples suggest the interest of such topics to Thai scholarship, it is notable that none of these active scholars were representative of the Thai archival professions.

Moreover, taking into consideration the history of internal colonialism in Thailand (as will be discussed in Chapter 2, pages 38 - 39), it is notable that the development of archival practice in a formal sense was explicitly derived from the country’s governing groups and was initiated in the central Thai state to collect records related to the royal activities and then records from government agencies. The first branch of the National Archives was officially established in 1952, after which branches were established in different regions throughout the country.⁴⁸ In 2013, 61 years after the first branch was established, the National Archives Act

⁴⁶ Narasaj, B. 2010. 'Memory in heritage studies: a primary survey', *Journal of Mekong Societies*, 6:2, pp.27 - 51

⁴⁷ Damrongviteetham, J. 2013. 'Narratives of the "red barrel" incident: collective and individual memories in Lamsin, southern Thailand', in Loh, K.S., S. Dobbs, and E. Koh (eds.) *Oral history in Southeast Asia. [electronic book]: memories and fragments* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan), pp.101-118

⁴⁸ National Archives of Thailand. *Background of the National Archives of Thailand* (2016)

was published. Nevertheless, this act seemed to be enforced because the national archives needed legal support to have public records sent from government agencies from across the country, as it seemed they did not have much cooperation from the agencies, and to ensure government records were legally protected by the national archives. Having studied the act, it is unlikely that it would protect the heritage of Thai communities, since its definition of archival records does not include any tangible or intangible heritage from the communities, as those records have to be “registered as archival records”; therefore, community archives would fall out from this definition completely.⁴⁹

Therefore, in the light of the absence of studies in this particular area, this study should be valuable for the field of archival development in Thailand, particularly in supporting heritage activities of the Thai communities as well as encouraging them to take part in upholding their community identities. Moreover, the ultimate aim is to support the Thai society as a whole to represent the diversity of Thailand, not only the mainstream Thai-ness or that of the subalterns.

1.4 PROBLEMS OF IMPORTING WESTERN CONCEPTS

Having articulated the need for archival practices in the hope of filling an identified gap in the literature on heritage and cultural management by Thai communities themselves, this does not mean that an archival concept developed by the Western world could be an instant solution to reconcile the situation in Thailand completely, since the contemporary context of Thailand is rather different from both the post-colonial movement discussed in relation to former colonial states and the activist awareness of symbolic annihilation or cultural misrepresentation by mainstream archives.

Even though the evidence discussed in this chapter might suggest that the internal colonialism in Thailand would push the Isan people to the margin of the mainstream Thai society, previous studies in relation to Isan areas such as that by Saowanee Alexander and Duncan McCargo implied that Isan people have adapted well to the Thai-ness influenced by the state because of a variety of factors. They discussed the use of languages – the central Thai and Isan dialects – and divided the discussion into three major themes: nationalism,

⁴⁹ Office of the Council of State. 2013. *National Archives Act 2013* (Bangkok: Office of the Council of State), p.1

social stratification, and language maintenance and shift.⁵⁰ As for the nationalism, it seemed that Isan people could decide whether they wanted to be Thai or Isan during a conversation via the language they used, depending on who they spoke to and what level of formality it was used for, to distinguish the Thai-ness and Isan-ness to which they all belong. Similarly, Isan people gained advantage from being able to speak the central Thai language, as this enabled them to shift their status within the Thai society and have a similar equality of life to others who could speak central Thai. However, the authors were sceptical about the future of the Isan language since there was already evidence that it was being used less in family communications, even though they did not think the domination of central Thai over the Isan dialect would be immediate since the Isan population comprised one-third of the nation and the majority of them still used their dialect to communicate.

Furthermore, after years of being under the Lan Xang kingdom's influence, Isan and Lao traditions and cultures had been blended and become part of the regular lifestyles of ethnic Isan people, who heavily depend on religious and local beliefs as well as the traditional social order, especially the Heet 12 Cong 14 core tradition as mentioned before. Somchai Wanlu, Songkhon Chantachon and Boonlert Rachote argued that this core tradition offered a potential means of suppressing social disputes in respect to the Isan local indigenous knowledge and should be included along with modern juridical processes and legislature for better social order in Isan communities.⁵¹

Therefore, it is arguable here that the internal colonialism in Thailand is less oppressive than the post-colonial narrative suggested in the Western literature, or awareness of oppression is less developed and Isan people are able to maintain multiple identities (Isan and Thai) simultaneously. It was therefore important to try to identify motivations for documentation and heritage preservation as they were described by the communities themselves, rather than imposing explanations derived from other contexts, and the methodology was designed to achieve this end. Moreover, intangible heritage plays a significant role in Thai communities through their religious and faith expressions. This particular aspect of Thai communities could bring challenges in applying archival concepts from the West to embrace the principles

⁵⁰ Alexander, S.T., and D. McCargo. 2014. 'Diglossia and identity in Northeast Thailand: Linguistic, social, and political hierarchy', *Journal of Sociolinguistics*, 18, p.79

⁵¹ Wanlu, S., S. Chantachon, and B. Rachote. 2009. 'An Application of Isan Local Indigenous Knowledge in Suppression of Social Disputes', *The Social Sciences*, 4, pp.180-185

into practices within a Thai context. All this suggests the importance of understanding Isan practices on their own terms and testing the value of the Western concept rather than trying to impose it without cultural sensitivity in a manner which could even be described as ‘colonialist’. Further discussion on archival principles and community archives will be referred to in Chapter 3, The Community Archives Movement (pages 42 - 62).

To conclude, this chapter has introduced definitions of documentation and heritage, value of self-documentation and management by the communities (along with sensitivity of indigenous peoples’ data and the need for a culturally sensitive archival practice), why this research question is relevant for heritage professionals in Thailand, and problems of importing Western concepts. The next chapter will discuss the context of Thailand and Isan provinces including a general understanding of definitions of community, then community in a Thai context, context of Isan provinces, and terminology used in Western and Thai contexts.

CHAPTER 2

CONTEXT OF THAILAND AND ISAN PROVINCES

This chapter will continue to introduce the community concept, both in general and in the Thai and Isan contexts. Additionally, a brief discussion of terminology used in Western and Thai contexts is also included in the final part of the chapter, the full details of which can be found in Appendix B, pages 342 – 357.

2.1 THAI CONTEXT: WHAT ARE THE COMMUNITIES?

This section will include a discussion about the definitions of community suggested by scholars from different social science areas, and will continue with a discussion of the same concept from different perspectives in a Thai context.

2.1.1 DEFINITIONS OF COMMUNITY

‘Community’ is a problematic term when it comes to an attempt to clarify a suitable definition since it is a fluid term that could be interpreted based on its surrounding context. It can include definitions based on territorial sharing, relationship between individuals, or identity concerns. Even though the literature reveals a range of concerns about defining the concept, it is still necessary to mention some of the definitions discussed by academic scholars, the majority of whom come from the field of social sciences including sociology and politics, to enable us to understand milestones in the development of the concept of ‘community’, as it also plays a significant role in this particular study.

According to sociologist Anthony Giddens, the development of a concept of ‘community’ in Western Europe can be traced back to the 14th century when the term was used to denote ‘the common people’ to differentiate them from the nobility.⁵² Later, in the 18th century, the term was used to describe two aspects of popular grouping; that is to say, by geographical specification and by common area of interest. The concept was later used to denote a contrast with ‘society’ such as *Gemeinschaft* (community bonds) and *Gesellschaft* (association bonds)

⁵² Giddens, A., and P.W. Sutton. 2014. *'Relationships and the life course: Community'*, in Giddens, A., and P.W. Sutton (eds.) *Essential Concepts in Sociology* (Oxford: Wiley), p. 234

proposed by Ferdinand Tönnies (as cited in Giddens).⁵³ In the later 20th century, the field of ‘community studies’ emerged, in which the main research purpose normally involved comprehending specific localities. By the 1980s and 1990s, the concept had shifted to understand everyday life and lifestyles, which allowed researchers to explore different aspects of social inequalities at the local level, including gender and ethnicity. With globalisation, the concept of community has recently shifted again, to explore the connection between global and local relationship, as the concept of the virtual community has been added to the borderless community aspect of the concept.⁵⁴

Although the definition of ‘community archive’ will be discussed elsewhere in this thesis, the concept of community archive is an explicit combination of the two terms, ‘community’ and ‘archive’; therefore, if ‘archive’ is a significant part of the community domain, it is necessary to make further investigation of the term ‘community’ from the above brief introduction in order to understand the concept from different aspects.

David Brown and Kai Schafft, from a sociological point of view, suggest that the ‘community’ concept is twofold: namely, social relationships and social systems, in which both are significantly inter-related.⁵⁵ Firstly, the social relationship aspect comprises 1) social networks and social capital, and 2) social exclusion. Social relationships are composed of two main elements, which are bonding and bridging, as the two components of social capital.

⁵³ Ibid., p.237

⁵⁴ Ibid., pp.237-239

⁵⁵ Brown, D.L., and K.A. Schafft. 2011. *Rural people and community in the 21st century: resilience and transformation* (Cambridge: Policy Press), pp.38-45

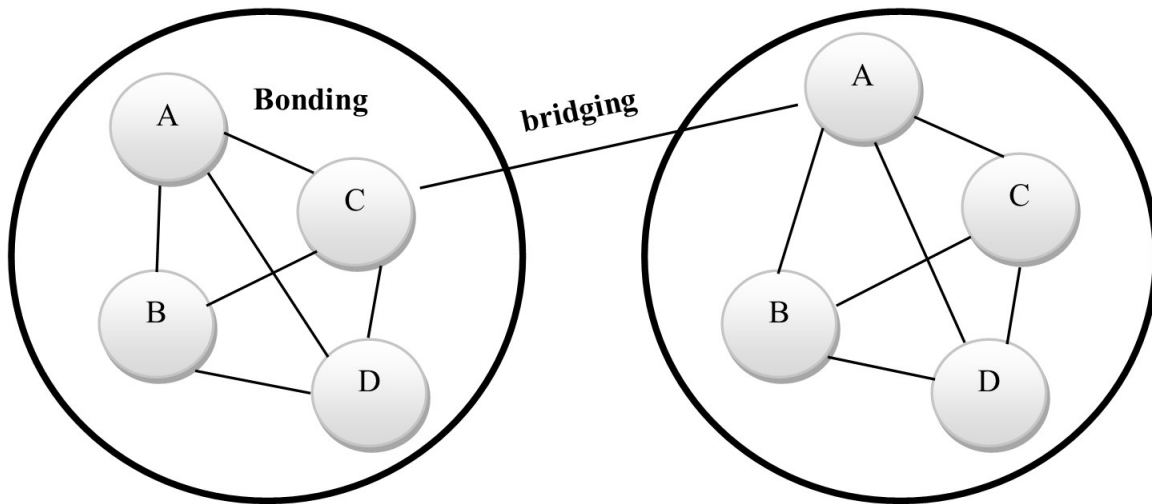


Figure 1: Bonding and Bridging Social Capital (taken from Brown and Schafft, 2011, p.41)

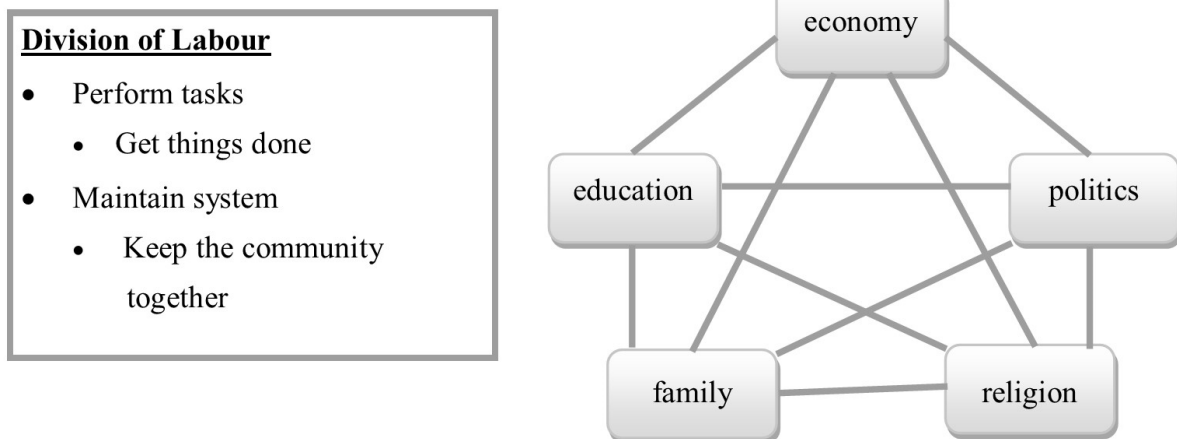


Figure 2: Community as a social system (taken from Brown and Schafft, 2011, p.44)

It is noted that the relationship between the inside (bond) and outside (bridge) plays an important role in keeping a community sustained; therefore, a good balance between the two is required.⁵⁶ These observations have proved valuable in the analysis of community cohesion and engagement with the collections discussed in chapters 5, 6 and 7.

This suggestion of community concept from Brown and Schafft is supported by Peter Block, where he claims that individual units are as important as the overall community because they

⁵⁶ Ibid., p.46

are the origin of community power.⁵⁷ At the same time, individuals must understand their context (bridging relationship) in order to exercise their action of belonging. Again, as will be shown, the present study includes a study of significant individuals within the community case studies, which required use of these concepts, which were found to be well suited to analysis of the findings.

Block comes from a background in community empowerment and he sees that ‘community’, as the reality of actual communities, is full of problems that need resolution for improvement for better conditions, in which individuals living in a particular community are part of the improvement plan. Influenced by the ideal concept of ‘beloved community’ by Martin Luther King, he also admits a spiritual aspect to the concept, but “it also is possible in the secular aspects of our everyday life”.⁵⁸ Community has been described as ‘the experience of belonging’, the explanation of which involves two meanings – the first is to be related to and a part of something, and the second is being an owner. Moreover, belonging is also a longing to be.⁵⁹ Therefore, he proposes that the solution for better community is to increase the amount of belongings and connectedness in the world; then to persuade the community citizen to act as a creator and co-owner of their community; and finally to encourage the individuals to consciously consider their capacity on what they do in order to acknowledge that values in return to the whole community. He believes that small groups or individuals are the origin of community power. Nevertheless, he notes that individuals must understand their context (bridging relationship) in order to exercise their action of belonging.

The spiritual dimension of the community concept is very relevant to the present study, where most of the case studies revealed a strong intersection between locality, ethnicity and religion. This is also supported by political scientist Peter Somerville, who argues that ‘community’ could be compared to a Buddhist teaching lesson known as the “Four Noble Truths”, which comprises *Dukha*, *Samudaya*, *Nirodha* and *Magga*.⁶⁰ According to Somerville, *Dukha* or sorrow is defined as the absence of community or the loss of meaningful interconnectedness; *Samudaya* or the cause of *Dukha* is referred to as the

⁵⁷ Block, P. 2008. *Community: the structure of belonging* (San Francisco: Berrett-Koehler), pp.179-180

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, p.xii

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, p.xii

⁶⁰ Somerville, P. 2011. *Understanding community: politics, policy and practice* (Bristol: The Policy Press, University of Bristol), p.240

existence of desire to have the beloved community; Nirodha or nirvana is the cessation of desire to have the beloved community; and Magga or the Eightfold path is to realise the beloved community by the recognition of what is right and counted as the right action.

The Buddhist beliefs found in all the case studies used in the present project make this a particularly relevant framework, which also suggests what non-Western concepts can contribute to Western understandings, one of the aims of the present study. Somerville's use of a Buddhist teaching lesson to describe the concept of community is actually the introduction to his fundamental concept of community, in which he argues that the concept is all about meaningful interconnectedness.⁶¹ By making sense of this meaningful interconnectedness, the author relates it to the concept of 'an imagined community' by Benedict Anderson, which can be associated with place, social group, way of life, or other characteristics shared with other people, for instance. Two possible means of the feeling of attachment are a desire and the sense of obligation to any kinds of whatever one feels belonging, to e.g. oneself, others, institution, community, country, humankind or planet. However, the author argues that community is not about desire or being 'tied down' but the sense of who we are and the recognition of others. Anderson is well known for developing a concept of 'imagined community' and he argues that print-capitalism is the vital element in enabling people in large numbers and across wide territorial distribution to think about themselves and to relate themselves to others.⁶² That is, in his suggestion, an 'imagined community' entails an imagined political community or a nation in the broader term.

Anderson's concept of 'imagined community' has proved useful for analysing the transformation of communities by social and economic forces. For instance, Bella Dicks examines one community in Wales, namely the Black Gold Community, that used to be a mining community but has been transformed to a tourism economy purposed under the name of the Rhondda Heritage Park after the local mine was closed. In the specific example of community given by Dicks, she first compares this community to Anderson's 'imagined community', in which this particular case study of hers is an imaginary community. The studied Rhondda Heritage Park has characteristics that Dicks thinks fit well with the concept of an imagined community, which she conceptualises into nine categories: 1) Solidarity, 2)

⁶¹ Ibid., p.240

⁶² Anderson, B. 2006. *Imagined communities: reflections on the origin and spread of nationalism* (London: Verso)

Shared values, norms and meanings, 3) Constraints and limitations, 4) Collective actions, 5) Historical identity, 6) Residuality, 7) Class identity, 8) Gender segregation, and 9) Locality.

These nine perspectives are eventually grouped into three distinct modes:

- 1) the social and cultural (ways of life and shared meanings);
- 2) the temporal (history and duration); and
- 3) the spatial (locality).

This case study by Dicks suggested that the concept of community has a significant relationship with identity, time and space, all of which are concepts that will be used in the present study. Furthermore, 'boundary' has been emphasised as a key element for identifying a community as a 'good community' and the community of the 'vanishing other'. The good community is basically the ideal perspective of a community which is embraced with its rich history and presents its 'forward march'.⁶³ Hence, the concept of community discussed by Dicks suggests that time as well as space constitute ideas of community across time rather than tied to particular historical circumstances.

Similarly to Dicks, Anthony Cohen also agreed upon the boundary of community which involves time and space significantly; he also adds that 'meaning' is a crucial component in the concept of community since meaning creates symbolic boundaries within the minds of people in the group.⁶⁴ Therefore, the reality of community is perceived by members of the community that attach meanings to create symbols amongst themselves; thus, the group's distinctive identity is identified.

In relation to Cohen's emphasis on boundary and meanings that are self-determined by members of a specific group, the concept could also be related to an area of 'collective memory' suggested by Maurice Halbwachs: that individual members of a group, be it an association, organisation, school, or family unit, construct memory that they share amongst themselves and which is influenced by temporal experiences encountered by them.⁶⁵

Therefore, the concept of community in terms of 'collective memory' is derived from the

⁶³ Dicks, B. 2000. *Heritage, place and community* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press), p.118

⁶⁴ Cohen, A.P. 2007. *The symbolic construction of community*. (London: Routledge)

⁶⁵ Whitehead, A. 2009. 'Collective memory: Maurice Halbwachs and collective memory', in Whitehead, A. (ed.) *Memory* (London: Routledge), pp. 125-138

combination of the concept of ‘imagined community’ by Anderson and the symbolic meaning with constructed boundaries suggested by Dicks and Cohen.

As was mentioned at the beginning of this section, the concept of community is a fairly fluid one depending on the context used to describe it. The definition of the term significantly shifted in the 1960s – 1970s with the flourishing of the civil rights movement, especially in the United States of America (USA). Activist historian Howard Zinn describes how a variety of sub-groups within American society started to speak up for their rights after the Second World War (WWII) ended and social attributes were highlighted by the movement, which focused on the rights of their group identities, such as those of gender, sexuality and ethnicity.⁶⁶ Thus, the community concept which was derived by this social justice movement is another type of community defined by empowerment in the political domain. It was primarily from this concept of community that the community archives movement grew, giving it a strongly political impetus with social justice objectives, which need to be appreciated when reviewing the associated literature.

In summary, ‘community’ could be identified in a number of ways depending on its context of application. It could be used to make a comparison between a bigger social unit such as a ‘society’; it could be identified as two supportive aspects, social relationship and social system; it could be constructed in the minds of group members as an ‘imagined community’, ‘symbolic boundaries and meanings’; or it could be seen as the consequences of social justice.

2.1.2 COMMUNITY IN A THAI CONTEXT

In order to understand the context of a Thai community, it is necessary to make sense of the concept of Thai society. Literature from sociological scholars shows that the history of community in Thailand has been greatly tied up with a concept of ‘Thai-ness’ defined by the mainstream institutions in Thailand for a lengthy period of years, as argued by Saichol Sattayanurak, who points out that the concept of Thai-ness has been significantly affected by the long history of governmental and political systems in Thailand.⁶⁷ As she explains,

⁶⁶ Zinn, H. 2003. *A people's history of the United States: 1492-present* (London: Pearson Longman)

⁶⁷ Sattayanurak, S. 2005. 'Prawattisat khwamkhit chat Thai krasae lak [The History of Mainstream Concept of Thai-ness]', in Nartsupha, C., and W. Burutrattanaphan (eds.) *Prawattisat khwamkhit Thai kap naeokhit chumchon [Historical concept of Thai-ness and Thai community]* (Bangkok: Thai Khadi Research Institute,

Thailand had long been in an absolute monarchic governing system before the revolution for democratic government in 1932 [BE 2475] and the name of the nation was changed from Siam to Thailand shortly after the revolution year, which had significant implications in terms of the political aspect, in particular for governmental centralisation.⁶⁸ However, before the revolution took place in the reign of King Rama VII, the concept of Thai-ness had long been used by past governments and the kings to unite the nation on different occasions, particularly during the era of King Rama VI (1 January 1880 – 25 November 1925).⁶⁹ Before the revolution, the institution of monarchy was threatened by an increase of Chinese settlers who came to trade with Siam but did not provide many benefits to the country, as they were not interested in becoming Thai citizens but were more concerned with gaining money from businesses and sending their incomes back to China. Moreover, Chinese communities began to spread out and some individuals became middle-class people in Thai society. Their growing power meant they had a major influence on society; in particular, there was evidence of a connection between the Chinese group and the ‘young troops’ or the ‘rebels Rattanakosin Era 130’, whose aim was to overthrow the government.⁷⁰

Therefore, the king had to engender a new strategy to unite the nation and reaffirm the strength of the monarchy to the Thai citizenry; therefore, he institutionalised the concept of ‘Thai-ness’ and the ‘other people’ (particular those who did not speak Thai) and emphasised the importance of the monarchy as an institution that could bring the Thai nation forward and bring equality with other civilised countries.⁷¹ His reformation included publication of books and a national anthem to promote national pride in the Thai-ness identity.⁷² In relation to the ‘concept of community’ in the Thai context, King Rama VI established a number of ‘institutions’ such as the army, boy scouts, school, a system of surname, and other clubs or associations driven by the idea of patriotism. Many of these had a local dimension, as he

Thammasat University), pp. 5-6; See also ---2002. 'Intellectuals and the establishment of identities in the Thai absolute monarchy state', *Journal of the Siam Society* (2002), 90.1 & 2, pp.101-124; and --- [2005]. *The Construction of Mainstream Thought on "Thainess" and the "Truth" Constructed by "Thainess"*

⁶⁸ Sattayanurak, S. 2005. 'Prawattisat khwamkhit chat Thai krasae lak [The History of Mainstream Concept of Thai-ness]', p.20

⁶⁹ Ibid., pp.46-55

⁷⁰ Ibid., pp.8-10

⁷¹ Ibid., p.16

⁷² Ibid., p.19

believed that national pride should be rooted within a small social unit such as a community; that if community members loved their locality, they should love the nation as well.⁷³

Nevertheless, Sattayanurak argues that this type of community construction was derived from the king's attempt to maintain absolute monarchic power; thus, he indoctrinated the citizens with the idea of 'community', which was part of the promotion of Thai-ness, in order to gain their trust in the idea of the king's right to rule the nation. She argues that this idea of community created class divisions in Thai society, thus increasing social exclusion for many members of pre-existing communities that were based on blood relationships. Furthermore, she points out that King Rama VI's and past governments' attempts to promote Thai-ness had involved different strategies which all seemed problematic and resulted in a range of social issues in Thai society until recent years. The main strategies applied by the past governments included the promotion of concepts such as 'Thai race', 'Thai nationalisation' and 'Utopia Thailand'. She argues that all of these strategies had emphasised the power of kingship as well as a rooted system of philanthropy, which reduced belief in the ordinary Thai communities' capability to be independent from central government support all the time. The Thai spontaneous setting communities, thus, had no place in the concept of Thai-ness defined by central government.

In addition, Craig Reynolds described the evolution of the term community or 'chumchon' (in Thai) in the book, *Words in Motion*. He explained that the term was recently defined after WWII, and that 'chum' means 'to swarm' and 'chon' means 'living beings, creatures', making the word 'chumchon' to literally mean 'the coming together of people', which had a different meaning from the English word, community, which tended to refer to shared property or mutual assistance. The impacts of socio-economic factors in the post-war period seemed to have a major influence on the definition of 'chumchon' in a Thai context. Reynolds indicated that the Marxist thought of 'primitive commune' and the American aid programmes had played a substantial role in shaping the conceptualisation of Thai community or 'chumchon', as they had influenced the scholarly intertwined discourse in the field of community studies. This was started in the mid-1950s by a few scholars who were influenced by Marxist theory. They were led by Chattip Nartsupa, who believed in the "sanctity, autonomy and self-sufficiency" of community, driven by this Western idea, and

⁷³ Ibid., pp.60-65

who later introduced the concept of ‘community culture’ that had been widely adopted by other academics as well as NGO workers to fight against the interference of government policies in village life. This latter incident was the consequences of the American aid programmes flooding into the country, which heavily drove the Thai bureaucratic sector to create a development strategy in rural and village areas for sovereignty. Thus, the fixed boundary of community had replaced the old term for village in Thai languages, “*ban*”, which can be paired with the term for city or state, “*muang*”, to mean homeland or native land (*ban muang*). *Ban* also refers to domestication and cultivation and is opposed to jungle or wild (*pa*). Moreover, Asian philosophy also appeared to shape the idea of ‘chumchon’ in Thailand, especially ‘swaraj’, Gandhi’s notion of the Indian village as an independent republic; and Dharma, Buddha’s teachings, suggested by a Thai social scientist, Phitthaya Wongkun, in his book published in 1999, *Building a New Society: Communitocracy – Dhammocracy*, which implied that the meaning of community was a combination of governance by community and Dharma.⁷⁴ Therefore, the birth of community or chumchon in Thailand was a combination of Western influence driven by communism, social movement, bureaucratic and political intervention, and the old-fashioned village lifestyles without adhering to the government’s idea of a community’s geographical location.

2.2 CONTEXT OF ISAN PROVINCES

The case studies for the present research are all located in the Northeast (also known as Isan) region of Thailand, which is comprised of 20 provinces: Kalasin, Khon Kaen, Chaiyapum, Nakhon Phanom, Nakhon Ratchasima, Buriram, Mahasarakham, Mukdahan, Yasothon, Roi-et, Loei, Srisaket, Sakon Nakhon, Surin, Nongkhai, Nongbua Lumpu, Amnat Charoen, Udon Thani, Ubon Ratchathani, and Bungkan. The region has an area covering one-third of the entire country and is situated on Korat high plateau. The Phu Paan Mountain divides the region into two basins, namely the Korat Basin covering the areas of the Chi and Moon river basins for three-quarters of the entire region, and the Sakon Nakhon basin on the northern side of the mountain, which covers the Mekong River basin.⁷⁵

⁷⁴ Reynolds, C.J. 2009. ‘Chumchon/Community in Thailand’, in Gluck, C., and A.L. Tsing (eds.) *Words in Motion* ([n.p.]: Duke University Press), pp. 286-305

⁷⁵ Thammasat Institute for Study of International Cooperation (TISIC). 2014. *The Northeast region: Introduction*.



Figure 3: Map of Thailand showing the Isan region, retrieved from <http://www.websanom.com/>, 14 June 2013

According to Dararat Mettariganond, Isan's population consists of people from different ethnic backgrounds such as Thai Isan (or Thai-Lao), Kuy (or Guay or Suai), Khmer, Phu Thai, Yo, Yoei, Ka Loeng, Ka So, Sa-ak, Tong Su (or Kula), Nyah Kur (or Chaobon), Thai Korat, Tai Dam, Chinese and Vietnamese.⁷⁶ Amongst these different ethnicities, the Thai Isan or Thai Lao people represent the majority population of the region. The diversity of ethnicity derives from the region's long historical background, as it was a peripheral border between Siam Kingdom, Lan Xang (an ancient kingdom before Lao PDR was established) and Khmer. In the past, these ethnic groups of people migrated and relocated in the Isan region on different occasions due to different sequences of events, such as wars, i.e. refugees and prisoners of war, or those who came to trade, especially the Tong Su and Chinese. Pre-historic Isan could also traced back to the establishment of ancient towns since BE 5-15 (CE - 539 to -529), which have left ancient remains and artefacts spread throughout the region, especially countless 'Se-ma-hin', stones marking the boundary of a temple from residential areas, which are found only in this region.⁷⁷ The ancient remains from pre-historic periods can demonstrate forms of cultural development in the Isan region that continue to shape the lifestyles of Isan people until today; for instance, the Se-ma-hin were related to religious

⁷⁶ Mettariganond, D. 2005. Prawattisat tongthin [Local History] (Khon Kaen: Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences), pp.86-91

⁷⁷ Ibid., p.92

worship and respect for the ancestors, both of which remain customary practices in Isan people's lifestyles.⁷⁸

In terms of the social and cultural aspects of Isan people, Mettariganond identifies that the people of Isan and Laos (from the ancient Lan Xang kingdom) had a very close relationship to one another since they came from the same Laos ethnicity that shared similar social and cultural values. This was especially the case before 1897, when the central power of the Thai state during the Bangkok-based Ratanakosin Kingdom took over the region, according to the centralisation policies, partly to protect the nation from Western colonisation.⁷⁹ As mentioned before, the Thai Isan or Thai Laos form the majority of the Isan people compared with other ethnic groups; therefore, Isan people living in a number of provinces today are sharing a culture influenced by the Lan Xang kingdom in the past. For example, textual genres were brought by Lan Xang rulers for communication and governing within Isan areas; therefore, present Isan literature and folklore have been substantially influenced by the Lan Xang literature.⁸⁰ Moreover, a belief system combining Buddhism and spiritual belief was also carried with the immigrants from Lan Xang into Isan, and thus assimilated with the locals' beliefs, creating a local belief system that has lasted until the present.⁸¹

As for education, Mettariganond explains that the Isan people originally had two main sources of education before they were governed by the central Thai state. These were: first, the social environment, and, second, the temple – the centre for local intellectual activity. The first consisted of senior members of a family transferring knowledge to younger generations; traditional Isan customs and traditions to give members of a community the essential knowledge about living their lives and especially the establishment of a taboo system and the Heet 12 Cong 14 tradition for social order.⁸² The second institution was the temple, which played a significant role in the individual life of Isan people from birth to death, and the monks were influential figures in this, as they were knowledgeable in a range of areas such as medicine, craftsmanship, literacy, and astrology, and would provide education or services relating to their skills to the villagers free of charge. Their communication could be orally, in

⁷⁸ Ibid., p.93

⁷⁹ Ibid., p.134

⁸⁰ Ibid., pp.134-135

⁸¹ Ibid., p.136

⁸² This tradition will be discussed further below.

person (for men in general since they could be ordained), and sometimes textually, via Dharma and Tai Noi (originally from Laos) scripts.

The belief system of the Isan people, as summarised by Mettariganond, consists of:

- 1) *belief of global and universal origin*, that everything was created by ‘Thane’, the main god, who had power over human beings, including their environment and destiny, and he created everything in this world, which came out from two giant bottle gourds and the first two human being of the population living in the Mekong region, Puu Sang Ka Sa Yaa Sang Ka Sii [grandfather Sang Ka Sa and grandmother Sang Ka Sii];
- 2) *belief in spirits*, including, first, ‘Thane’, which consisted of many Thane gods (polytheism) influencing human beings in different means; second, heroic spirits, which were believed to be good spirits looking after a community – thus, the villagers would establish a shrine for them and regularly worship them; third, ancestral spirits, which include ancestral spirits of any individual families and the community’s communal guardian spirit, which had a shrine for the community members as a whole; and, fourth, disadvantaged or bad spirits, which were not respected by the villagers because they were believed to harm people;
- 3) *belief in demigods*, such as that which appeared in inherited Lan Xang folklore of a hero who could eliminate social disorders and who brought peace to Lan Xang’s society and was believed to be a son of ‘Thane Pah Kuen’; and
- 4) *other beliefs*, such as angels, tree nymphs, auspicious time, portents, superstitions, traditional medicine, etc.⁸³

In addition to the belief systems and other background information about Isan which have been mentioned above, Thai-Isan communities also maintain their principal tradition and custom, namely the Heet 12 Cong 14, which are regarded as social organising systems. The Heet 12 and Cong 14 are two separate systems. First, Heet 12 means moral customary practices consisting of 12 models for practising across 12 months. All these 12 practices are mostly related to local and religious ceremonial activities that are associated with the system of belief in the aforementioned section. Second, Cong 14 is a custom for living an individual life as well as being part of a general social order that includes guidelines for the appropriate demeanour for different social categories such as guidelines for a governor, guidelines for

⁸³ Ibid., pp.138-140

parents, guidelines for monks, etc. Furthermore, Isan tradition also includes taboo belief (so called Kha Lum) in which the taboos are associated with ‘sinful’ behaviour so that people would be afraid and obey the taboos. These taboos relate to people’s appropriate manners, such as eating, e.g. giving leftover food to seniors is forbidden; walking, i.e. stomping feet up the stairs is forbidden; and sleeping, i.e. sleeping with the head pointing to the west is forbidden.⁸⁴

During the time of close connection with the Lan Xang kingdom, the Isan region seemed to have some degree of freedom, although it had to send regular payments to the central Thai state as part of its peripheral territory depended on the Thai kingdom. During that time, as noted by Mettariganond, the Isan people were free to maintain their inherited traditions and beliefs since the central Thai state did not require any changes of governing to the region.⁸⁵

Nonetheless, the traditional ways of living and the relatively close-knit community lifestyle was constantly impacted by government policies since the period of King Rama V (1868 - 1910), and the meaning of community in a Thai context had been redefined by the then government’s imported Western concept of a geographic system of governing, leading to the separation of the traditional division of communities into governing territorial areas including province, district, sub-district and villages.⁸⁶ Having regulated the space like this, existing communities based on ethnicity, family relationships and location of habitation were not always co-existent with the new system of spatial regulation. Furthermore, the modern Thai governing system – especially since the first issue of the National Economic and Social Development Plan (NESDP) in 1961 had been applied to advise the national direction of development up until the present issue (11th for 2012 - 2016) – has brought further disadvantages, especially for the Isan region and its people, more than benefits. This is because the nation’s development policies only place emphasis on centralisation, which empowers central government, rather than simultaneously developing locality at the same time as developing the capital and industrialised areas of the country.⁸⁷ The concept of locality means that a community should be determined by the people living in it, not by the

⁸⁴ Ibid., pp.140-143

⁸⁵ Ibid., p.151

⁸⁶ Ibid., p.153

⁸⁷ Boonmathya, R.T. 2003. 'A Narrative of Contested Views of Development in Thai Society: Voices of Villagers in Rural Northeastern Thailand', *Southeast Asian Studies*, 41:3, pp.269-298

government. Local inhabitants would know the boundaries of their community, such as using a river or a mountain to locate a territory, or the “cultural landscape”, which is related to space and time that is significant to a specific locality.⁸⁸

Indeed, past policies driven by central Thai governments had greater socio-economic impacts on Isan communities mainly because the priority of national development seemed to concentrate on a centralised infrastructure and empowering the nation’s capital more than decentralising the governing to localities. The centralisation and ‘Thai-ness’ agendas have led to the marginalisation of Isan people.

David Brown suggests the term ‘internal colonialism in the Northeast’ because government policies exploited and discriminated against Isan people so that the general perception of Isan people by the Thai state and by people from other regions was that they were subordinate and inferior.⁸⁹ Many studies have given examples of recent incidents showing the demand for social justice for Isan identity represented through notable political strikes by the red-shirt protestors, the majority of whom were members of the Isan population and supported the ex-prime minister, Taksin Chinawatra, in 2010 (14 March - 19 May), and the action of committing arson on the landmark shopping mall in the heart of Bangkok’s business district.⁹⁰ This incident triggered the spread of hatred for Isan people throughout the country, especially from the middle-class Bangkokians.⁹¹ At that time of political crisis, a system of colour-coding appeared to distinguish different groups: ‘yellow-shirt’ and ‘blue-shirt’ to represent the majority of the middle-class population in Bangkok and elsewhere in Thailand, and these were the opponents of the ‘red shirts’ and acted against Taksin’s government. In the meanwhile, the severe damage to the landmark shopping mall and the centre of ‘red-shirt’ Isan protest were situated in the critical space of Bangkok, and represented the protestors’ need to have a ‘cultural citizenship’ position equal with the middle-class people in Bangkok in order to have access to the standard lifestyles suggested by the central Thai state. This

⁸⁸ Vallibhotama, S. 2008. *Kumue chuk kid+: Kwam mai khong bhumi wattanatham, kan suksa jak pai nai lae sumnuk khong tongthin* [A manual of sudden realisation+: the meaning of cultural landscape, the study of local awareness from internal context] (Bangkok: Lek-Prapai Foundation), p.35

⁸⁹ Brown, D. 1994. 'Internal colonialism and ethnic rebellion in Thailand', in Brown, D. (ed.) *The state and ethnic politics in Southeast Asia* (London: Routledge), pp.158-205

⁹⁰ Thabchumpon, N., and M. Duncan. 2011. 'Urbanized Villagers in the 2010 Thai Redshirt Protests', *Asian Survey*, 51, pp.993-1018

⁹¹ Camfield, L., A. Masae, J. McGregor, and B. Promphaking. 2013. 'Cultures of Aspiration and Poverty? Aspirational Inequalities in Northeast and Southern Thailand', *Soc.Indicators Res.*, 114, pp.1049-1072

implied the frustration of Isan people about their subordinated identity within the larger Thai society.⁹²

The idea of ‘cultural citizenship’ mentioned above is also partly driven by central Thai government policies that attempted to have an ‘Imagined Thailand’ where the citizenship should have a horizontal view of Thai-ness according to a central Thai or Bangkok standard. The volume *Imagining communities in Thailand* edited by Shigeharu Tanabe presents different cases of Thai communities which demonstrate some examples of social movement among the marginalised communities in Thailand in which the group members felt constrained by their perceived social inequalities, such as race, ethnic, religion, or gender, so that they could not assimilate well with the mainstream Thai culture and standard of the state.⁹³ This inspired them to struggle, negotiate or create their ‘communities of imagination’ to represent their identities and space. Along the same lines as ‘imagined’ and ‘imagining’ Thai communities, a study by Alexandra Denes discusses the situation of the ethnic Khmer folk music genre, Kantruem, and its misrepresentation by the state although it had been listed on the national register of intangible heritage by the Thailand Department of Cultural Promotion. Her anthropological studies suggested that the lack of communication, especially from the government sector with the ethnic community regarding their heritage before the listing took place, had led to the misrepresentation and exclusion of various parts of the genre; for example, the popular Kantruem was promoted rather than the traditional Kantruem; the spiritual mediumship was omitted from the promoted information; the ethnic relationship with the Cambodian Kantruem genre was not recognised; only a few amongst the many local Kantruem musicians and singers were recognised and promoted by the state; and there was ambiguity regarding the tangible support for the future of genre transmission to younger generations of this community. This example clearly demonstrates the reality of marginalisation as the result of treatment by central Thai governments up to the present day.⁹⁴

The above shows that concepts of community have been used by scholars working on Thailand both to understand traditional social structures based on family relationships,

⁹² Mills, M.B. 2012. 'Thai Mobilities and Cultural Citizenship', *Critical Asian Studies*, 44, pp.85-112

⁹³ Tanabe, S. (ed.). 2008. *Imagining communities in Thailand: ethnographic approaches* (Chiang Mai, Thailand: Mekong Press)

⁹⁴ Denes, A. 2015. 'Folklorizing Northern Khmer Identity in Thailand: Intangible Cultural Heritage and the Production of 'Good Culture'', *Sojourn: Journal of Social Issues in Southeast Asia*, 30, pp.1-34

ethnicity, religion and habitation and to understand the imposition of an ‘imagined community’ (in Anderson’s terms) of Thai-ness by a centralising and modernising monarchy based in Bangkok. The conflict between the two concepts of community has resulted both in the marginalisation of the Isan population (as an ethnicity) and the fragmentation of existing communities. The response has been the assertion of different forms of ‘imagined communities’ representing shared identities claimed by their members as a result of external oppression. This is the essential context for the present study’s choice of Isan as a region for research and for analysis of the research findings.

2.3 TERMINOLOGY USED IN WESTERN AND THAI CONTEXTS

The background of the community archive movement will be provided in the next chapter, with a literature review of community archives, which will include discussion of the historical overview, overview of the literature, and community archive theory. However, the use of the term ‘community archive’ has been identified in different processes of this study and thus been provided separate from the aforementioned chapter, and this can be referred to further in Appendix B, Terminology (pages 342 – 357), for more information. Nevertheless, it is also worth providing here a summary of that information described in the appendix in order to lead to better comprehension about the ideas of community-based heritage organisations perceived by Western and Thai audiences.

Western literature suggests that a quantity of terms could be used to refer to community-based heritage activities, comprising: local history group, oral history project, community history project, community memory project, independent community archive, independent archive, informal archive, heritage initiative, community archival activity, non-professionalized archival activity, non-professionalized heritage activity, non-professional archival initiatives, independent community-led archives, autonomous archive, ethnic archive, oral history archive, and local archive (see also page 343 - 344).

Further investigation of these terms also reveals various terms can be used to mean the same thing (‘community archive’) and that they can represent the concept of community archive; some terms, such as ‘local archive’, could have different meanings in different English-speaking countries (see the discussion on page 345); a similar situation is also applicable in a Thai context for the term ‘community archive’. The term could be interpreted in Thai as

'จดหมายเหตุชุมชน' [chod-maai-hedd-chum-chon]. Nevertheless, this particular term does not appear to be used in Thai literature up to the point when this study was conducted. Moreover, it is necessary to note that the same term, 'จดหมายเหตุชุมชน' [chod-maai-hedd-chum-chon], is a combination of individual words including the term 'จดหมายเหตุ' [chod-maai-hedd], translated as 'archive', and could be interpreted in different ways depending on how the words are joined together, as this changes their meaning (see the discussion on pages 345 - 346).

In addition, the discussion in Appendix B (pages 342 - 357) describes the detailed processes of finding potential terms to supplement the interview process in order to understand how Thai communities understand the concept of community archive; therefore, the terms found in Western literature were translated into Thai and some more Thai terms were invented by the researcher since they seemed to be more understandable than the translated terms to the Thai audience. Some of these final potential terms are as following: local history group (กลุ่มประวัติศาสตร์ท้องถิ่น), ethnic archive (จดหมายเหตุชาติพันธุ์), community memory project (โครงการความทรงจำชุมชน), oral history project (โครงการประวัติศาสตร์บอกเล่า), recordkeeping project (โครงการจัดเก็บเอกสาร), local archive (จดหมายเหตุท้องถิ่น), local history club (ชมรมประวัติศาสตร์ท้องถิ่น), บันทึกมรดกชุมชน (records of community heritage), บันทึกมรดกและวัฒนธรรมชุมชน (records of community heritage and culture), บันทึกวัฒนธรรมชุมชน (records of community culture), and ศูนย์วัฒนธรรม (cultural centre). (See also pages 347 - 355.)

It is also notable that the words 'chum chon' (ชุมชน) and 'tong thin' (ท้องถิ่น) are purposively used in some of those terms as the researcher has articulated their meanings in both Thai and English and has concluded that they could easily be used and understood by the research participants. (See more discussion details on pages 355 - 356.)

This chapter has provided a discussion of the definition of community, community in a Thai context, the context of Isan provinces, and the terminology used in Western and Thai contexts. Thus, this general background has been established for better understanding of different contexts before further discussion focusing on the community archives movement in the next chapter.

CHAPTER 3

THE COMMUNITY ARCHIVES MOVEMENT

This chapter provides a literature review on the community archives movement; it is divided into three main parts: part 1, historical overview; part 2, overview of literature; and part 3, community archive theory. In the next section, we will focus on the definition of community archives; this will cover the issues of features of community archives and motivations for their establishment (including aims and objectives, authority, and digital and technological development). Next, in part 2, the discussion will cover the themes emerging from the literature, which include relationship with traditional archives, provenance, sustainability (funding and content), and redefinition of professional role. The final section, part 3, will involve community archive theory, in which models of research on community archives will be described.

PART 1: HISTORICAL OVERVIEW

3.1 WHAT IS A 'COMMUNITY ARCHIVE' (BASED ON A WESTERN DEFINITION)?

The concept of 'community archives' has only been acknowledged within the past couple of decades by professionals working and/or dealing with archival management. However, the concept soon gained traction, especially through scholars in the post-colonial era who began to encourage the archival profession to reconsider the role of archival professionals and think beyond public archival legacy to embrace the stories and heritage of ordinary people, including groups marginalised by their social qualities such as ethnicity, sexuality, religion, and gender in the light of decolonisation and social justice.

The wider interest in archival practices from those who were not traditional archival professionals was a response to the increase in social justice/civil rights movements in the USA in the 1960s – 1970s.⁹⁵ The social justice phenomenon had a substantial impact on archival professionals in widening perspectives, which was evident on various occasions such

⁹⁵ Ham, F.G. 1975. 'The Archival Edge', *The American Archivist*, 38, pp.5-13; Miller, F.M. 1981. 'Social History and Archival Practice', *The American Archivist*, 44, pp.113-124

as in 1998 with the first call from South African scholars regarding different issues relating to community archives.⁹⁶ Those issues included the lack of clarity in definition and above all the gap between marginalised communities and mainstream archival institutions. Amongst the SA scholars, Kathy Eales emphasised that “In a community archive, community members are more prominent in deciding what materials or artefacts are pertinent to reclaiming the spaces in their social memory”.⁹⁷ Moreover, Verne Harris strongly underscored the importance of community archives in relation to social memory: that “an important space, arguably an increasing space, in the arena of social memory can be filled – is best filled – by non-public archives”.⁹⁸

In addition to the observations of Eales and Harris in relation to South Africa, the concept of community archives spread internationally throughout countries with developed archival systems, especially the Anglophone nations of North America (USA and Canada), New Zealand (NZ), Australia and the United Kingdom (UK). The former two countries have long histories of group expressions since the 19th century, where special collections and historical societies were used as the bases of their archival collecting activities.⁹⁹

In NZ, the term ‘community archives’ appeared in a glossary of the Archives New Zealand Annual Report 2010/11.¹⁰⁰ Further investigation on The Community Archive portal, the webpage, found an explanation that “[it] is a hub for New Zealand’s archival organisations to showcase their collections. It is a free, easy to use mini archive management system supported by Archives New Zealand”.¹⁰¹ This portal was originally developed to create easy access to the NRAM paper-based format, which was concentrated on collections of public

⁹⁶ Eales, K. 1998. 'Community archives: Introduction', *S.A. Archives Journal*, 40, p.11; Harris, V. 1998. 'Some thoughts on the relationship between the national archives and community archives', *S.A. Archives Journal*, 40, pp.36-37; Layne, V. 1998. 'The sound archive at the District Six Museum: A work in progress', *S.A. Archives Journal*, 40, pp. 22-26; Lekhutile, S. 1998. 'Community participation', *S.A. Archives Journal*, 40, pp.16-19; Martin, K. 1998. 'Lesbian biography and oral history in the gay and lesbian archives of South Africa', *S.A. Archives Journal*, 40, pp.33-35; Mashiri, L. 1998. 'Networking, lobbying and advocacy', *S.A. Archives Journal*, 40, pp.27-32; Wolfe, M. 1998. 'The Lesbian Herstory Archives', *S.A. Archives Journal*, 40, pp.20-21

⁹⁷ Eales, K. 1998. 'Community archives: Introduction', *S.A. Archives Journal*, 40, p.11

⁹⁸ Harris, V. 1998. 'Some thoughts on the relationship between the national archives and community archives', *S.A. Archives Journal*, 40, pp.36-37

⁹⁹ Bastian, J.A., and B. Alexander. 2009. 'Introduction: communities and archives - a symbolic relationship', in Bastian, J.A., and B. Alexander (eds.) *Community archives: the shaping of memory* (London: Facet), p. xxii

¹⁰⁰ Retrieved from <http://archives.govt.nz/about/publications-media/annual-reports/archives-new-zealand-annual-report-201011>, 4 October 2016

¹⁰¹ Retrieved from

http://thecommunityarchive.org.nz/about_the_community_archive/what_is_the_community_archive, 4 October 2016

archives and libraries. Nevertheless, the portal had made a significant shift in 2009 from the public focus to include collections provided by the ordinary communities as well as individuals, to acknowledge the community ownership of many of the resources listed.

Community archives in Australia have been linked with indigenous rights and participation in archival management and, when the records continuum model was introduced, the idea of community archive was indicated in dimension four, which included collective memory that would ensure records by local and/or indigenous groups would not be forgotten.¹⁰² Various terms have been used to refer to institutions that share the same aims including 'community archives', community-based approach, and community approaches to heritage and community projects.¹⁰³ The Australian government also established a similar portal to NZ's Community Archive portal called Australia's Community Heritage, under the 'Your Community Heritage' Programme. Australia's Community Heritage was a place for anyone to tell stories of persons, places or events that are important to them. In this case, the website itself may be considered as a community archives in the form of virtual oral history.¹⁰⁴

Moving from Australasia to the UK, the phenomenon of community archives is well recognised and has been flourishing since the last decade, especially those driven by concerns over marginalisation and diversity of ethnicity.¹⁰⁵ It is necessary to mention that discussion about community archives appearing in the present thesis may exemplify theory and practices more from the UK for pragmatic reasons, although other relevant resources from outside the UK will be mentioned where relevant.

For the UK, it is likely that community archives became more widely recognised after a statement referring to their value appeared in the Archives Task Force (ATF) report released

¹⁰² McKemmish, S., S. Faulkhead, and L. Russell. 2011. 'Distrust in the archive: Reconciling records', *Archival Science*, 11, pp.211-239; Nakata, M. 2012. 'Indigenous memory, forgetting and the archives', *Archives & Manuscripts*, 40, pp.98-105; McKemmish, S. 2001. 'Placing records continuum theory and practice', *Archival Science*, 1, pp.333-359

¹⁰³ Sassoon, J., and T. Burrows. 2009. 'Minority reports: indigenous and community voices in archives. Papers from the 4th International Conference on the History of Records and Archives (ICHORA4), Perth, Western Australia, August 2008', *Archival Science*, 9, pp.1-5; Greer, S. 2010. 'Heritage and empowerment: Community-based Indigenous cultural heritage in northern Australia', *International Journal of Heritage Studies*, 16, pp.45-58

¹⁰⁴ 'Welcome to the Community Heritage website', retrieved from <http://www.communityheritage.net.au/content/about-site>, 22 April 2014

¹⁰⁵ Bastian, J.A., and B. Alexander. 2009. 'Introduction: communities and archives - a symbolic relationship', in Bastian, J.A., and B. Alexander (eds.) *Community archives: the shaping of memory* (London: Facet), p. xxii

in 2004; it mentioned that “archives in the community [were] as important to society as those in public collections and should therefore be accessible to everyone”.¹⁰⁶ After the concept was marked as significant for the archival community, the community archives movement in the UK gathered force, especially with the establishment of the Community Archives and Heritage Group (CAHG) in 2006. This organisation developed as a central hub for supporting community archives in the UK in a range of areas, especially in the provision of virtual space for the organisations to disseminate their collections.¹⁰⁷ Moreover, recent investigation of its website, www.communityarchives.org.uk, revealed that the site had been continuously updated with useful information and essential resources, e.g. guidelines for funding and cataloguing, and contacts for advice to support the groups of community archives particularly in the UK and Ireland; and there have been more and more community archives added to the site as well as regular events, news, and awards offering for best practice in community archives.¹⁰⁸

Having considered the 2004 report as a milestone in the development of community archives, perhaps it could be argued that studies in this field have only recently developed, even though the idea could be traced back to the social movements of the 1960s – 1970s. Nevertheless, relevant literature shows that studies in community archives have only been significant in number since the late 20th century, and that more related studies are being constantly added to the field. This literature shows that the discussion regarding community archives can be associated with a variety of study areas including ‘collective memory’, which is related to heritage and cultural studies and intersects with discussion of intangible heritage including oral history, performance and music (Eric Ketelaar; Bastian);¹⁰⁹ anthropological study of social movements, such as studies by Andrew Flinn, Mary Stevens and Elizabeth Shepherd which documented the involvement of interest groups in the field of community archives before the booming of the CAHG;¹¹⁰ a conceptual framework to identify issues relevant to

¹⁰⁶ ATF, 2004, 43 as cited in Flinn, A. 2010. *The impacts of independent and community archives on professional archival thinking and practice*, in Hill, J. (ed.) *The Future of Archives and Recordkeeping: a reader* (London: Facet Publishing), p.145

¹⁰⁷ Community Archives and Heritage Group. 2014. *Why join us?: How the Community Archives and Heritage group can help you* (UK: CAHG)

¹⁰⁸ Investigation in October 2016.

¹⁰⁹ Bastian, J.A. 2009. 'Play mas': carnival in the archives and the archives in carnival: records and community identity in the US Virgin Islands', *Archival Science*, 9, pp.113-125; Ketelaar, E. 2014. 'Archives, memories and identities', in Brown, C. (ed.) *Archives and recordkeeping: theory into practice* (London: Facet), pp. 131-170

¹¹⁰ Flinn, A., M. Stevens, and E. Shepherd. 2009. 'Whose memories, whose archives? Independent community archives, autonomy and the mainstream', *Archival Science*, 9, pp.71-86

the study and management of community archives of marginalised and activist communities (Anne Gilliland);¹¹¹ relationships with mainstream archives and the roles of archivists, both charting the challenges posed by community archives to traditional concepts and supporting a now growing trend of sharing and participation (Flinn; Jon Newman);¹¹² guidelines and/or suggestions regarding the management of collections which could cover a range of materials including tangible and intangible items as well as digital collections (Bastian and Ben Alexander);¹¹³ and lastly issues concerning sustainability, for which guidelines and recommendations have been offered to community archive practitioners to support their decision and remind them about the issues related to sustainability in order for them to work with their collection more effectively (Joanna Newman; Michelle Caswell).¹¹⁴

Next, the discussion will focus on features including aims and objectives, provenance and content of community archives; the history of definitions; and the relationship of community archives with traditional archives.

3.2 FEATURES

The report published by the Community Archives and Heritage Group (CAHG) entitled *The impact of community archives* suggested that community archives are “...groups of evidence brought together by people sharing an interest in finding out about their community and how it developed. They preserve an account of its past and present and often build on this to create awareness, interest and activity in the wider community.”¹¹⁵

Flinn argued that “Community histories or community archives are the grassroots activities of documenting, recording and exploring community heritage in which community participation, control and ownership of the project is essential.”¹¹⁶ Another article by Flinn,

¹¹¹ Gilliland, A.J. [2012]. *Voice, Identity, Activism (VIA): a community-centric framework for approaching archives and recordkeeping*

¹¹² Flinn, A. 2010. 'An attack on professionalism and scholarship'?: Democratising Archives and the Production of Knowledge', *Ariadne: A Web & Print Magazine of Internet Issues for Librarians & Information Specialists*, 30; Newman, J. 2012. 'Revisiting Archive Collections: Developing Models for Participatory Cataloguing', *Journal of the Society of Archivists*, 33, pp.57-73

¹¹³ Bastian, J.A. and Alexander, B. (ed.). 2009. *Community archives: the shaping of memory* (London: Facet)

¹¹⁴ Newman, J. 2011. 'Sustaining Community Archives', *Aplis*, 24, pp.37-45; Caswell, M. 2014. 'Toward a survivor-centered approach to records documenting human rights abuse: lessons from community archives', *Archival Science*, 14, pp.307-322

¹¹⁵ Community Archives and Heritage Group. 2007. *Impact of community archives* (UK: CAHG), p.3

¹¹⁶ Flinn, A. 2007. 'Community Histories, Community Archives: Some Opportunities and Challenges', *Journal of the Society of Archivists*, 28, p.153

Stevens and Shepherd added to the definition of community archives: that they are “collections of material gathered primarily by members of a given community and over whose use community members exercise some level of control. ...the defining characteristic of community archives is the active participation of a community in documenting and making accessible the history of their particular group and/or locality on their own terms”.¹¹⁷ These definitions were echoed by Newman, who defined community archives as “collections of archival records that originate in a community – that is, a group of people who live in the same location or share other forms of community of interest – and whose collection, maintenance and use involves active participation of that community.”¹¹⁸

According to the above definitions of community archives, it is evident that the concept of ‘community archives’ presents common characteristics emphasised in the usage of words or phrases such as ‘community members’, ‘participation’, ‘level of control’, and ‘ownership’. Therefore, it might be appropriate to suggest the working definition of community archives for the purposes of this research as follows:

Community archive is a collection of tangible heritage or an action of self-dedication to preserve the intangible heritage of a community of which community engagement amongst its members in such processes is the most important feature.

This working definition was developed from previous studies and was used for establishing the methodological framework discussed in Chapter 4, Methodology, used to inform the data collection processes. After having consulted with relevant literature, it was determined that ‘community archives’ involve four main aspects, which are 1) collection or action, 2) ownership and management, 3) activities and participation, and 4) communication and time.

Since the term ‘community archives’ is composed of two significant words, ‘community’ and ‘archive’, this combination makes the concept of community archives special because it shows the inter-relationship between two distinct concepts that would very much influence the characteristics of community archives.

¹¹⁷ Flinn, A., M. Stevens, and E. Shepherd. 2009. 'Whose memories, whose archives? Independent community archives, autonomy and the mainstream', *Archival Science*, 9, p.73

¹¹⁸ Newman, J. 2011. 'Sustaining Community Archives', *Aplis*, 24, p.38

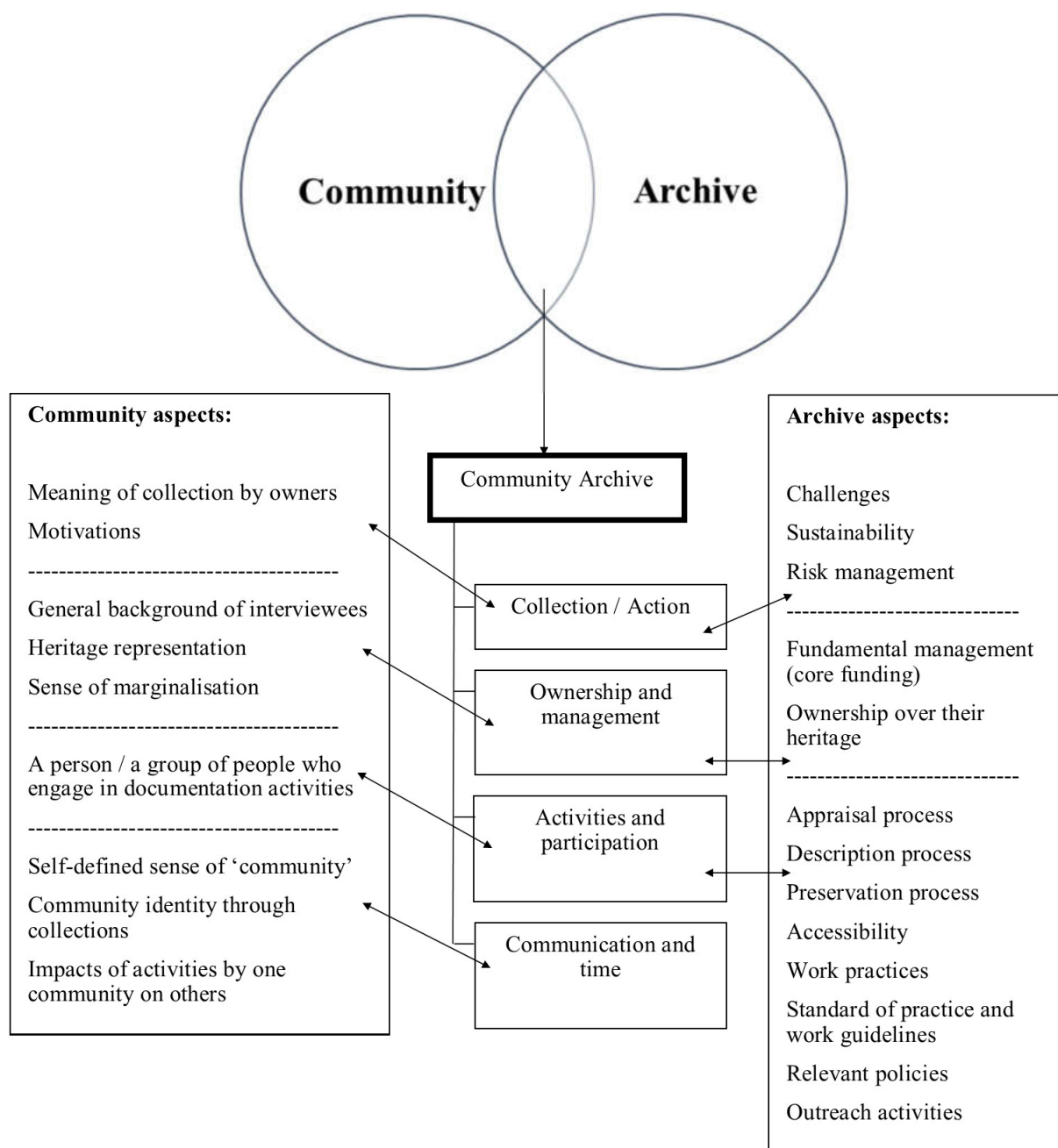


Figure 4: Relationships amongst community, archive, and community archive for the four aspects and issues that are relevant for the term

Figure 4 shows the relationships between the four main aspects of community archive – collection or action, ownership and management, activities and participation, and communication and time – in relation to issues around community, Community aspects, and archive, Archive aspects, as illustrated in the above diagram. These issues were developed for the methodological framework in Chapter 4 to establish selection of the case studies.

Although these issues relating to community and archives were set up for the purpose of creating a methodological framework, they will also be used for the analysis and discussion of the findings in later chapters.

As identified, a community archive is established by a community or a group of people who share a common interest or any other characteristics for which geography does not have to be important; it could be established through real or virtual interaction. These groups may have shared collections or begin to produce materials together and these materials or collections will become representatives of their identities. Products or materials produced by the groups will become records of those groups or communities and the records will become their archives, if the group members agree to keep them beyond the circumstances of their production. The group or community's archival collection may also be called 'heritage'. As already discussed in Chapter 1, Introduction, heritage could be either tangible (e.g. printed text) or intangible (e.g. song). Since heritage is defined by a community, it can represent the identities of that community. Although it may not represent every individual, it is the selective (collective) memory of the group, which they can use to tell stories about themselves. Even within a community, not every story is chosen to represent the identity of the group because there is always the issue of cultural dominance, which means that elite members of a community can control community representation so that the records they choose to represent the group may marginalise the 'other', 'the marginalised', or 'the exiled' to be distinguished from the 'mainstream'.¹¹⁹

¹¹⁹ Harris, V. 2002. 'The archival sliver: Power, memory, and archives in South Africa', *Archival Science*, 2, p.76

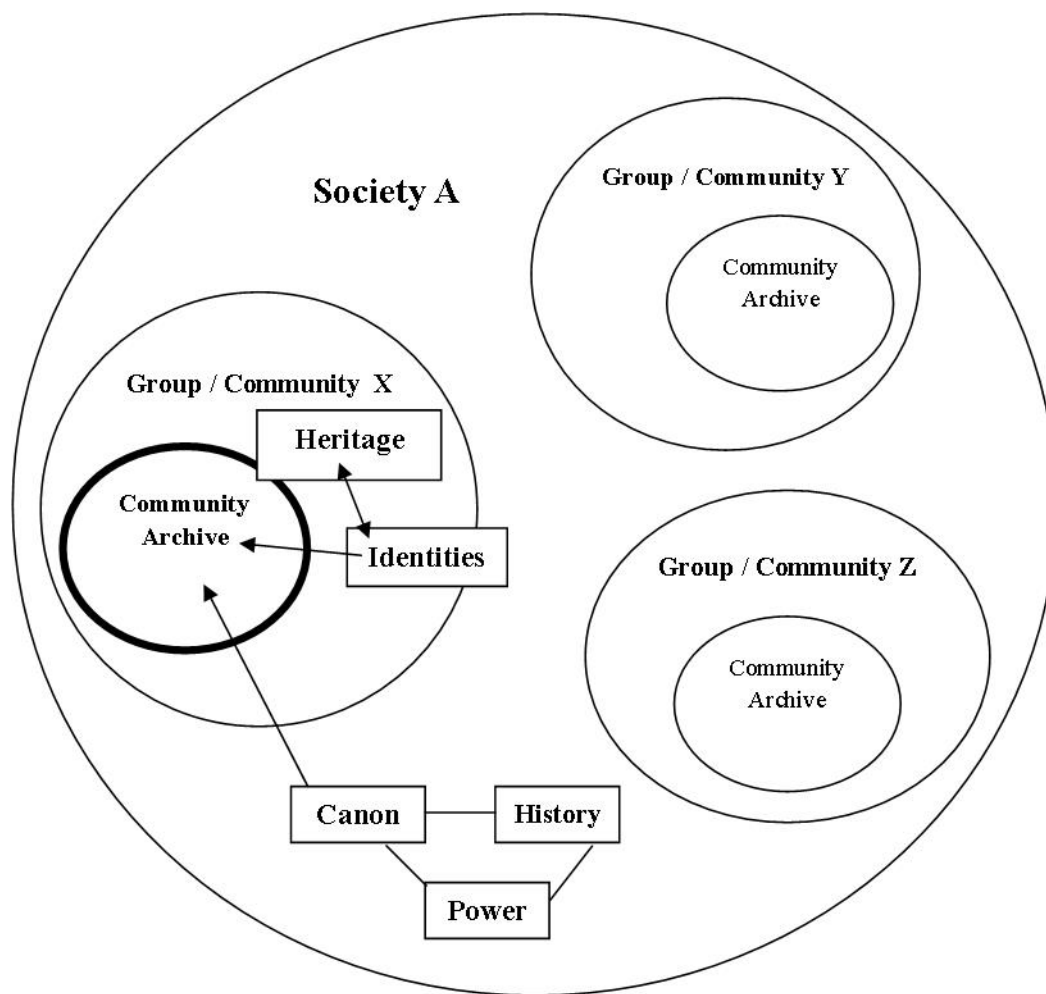


Figure 5: Diagram displaying relationships of community archives with history and heritage and relevant elements

The above figure shows the relationship between community archives, heritage and history from the earlier discussion. The figure illustrates that in one society a number of communities or groups could exist. Within one community or group, the members may have materials or traditions they would like to preserve as archives in a community setting, of which a community archive is one form of organisation within which the community members may choose to maintain their archives. These archival records are an aspect of community heritage, traces of the past preserved for present purposes, including representing their community's history. Its heritage represents the identities of the community in relation to its past existence. Moreover, the diagram also shows two elements that have an impact on the heritage and history of a community: the history canon, which may be created externally to the community, and the power that is controlled by the community's elites. Both of these

forces can be expressed through marginalisation, preventing people from telling their own history.

3.3 MOTIVATIONS FOR ESTABLISHING COMMUNITY ARCHIVES

From the definition of community archives discussed in the previous section, one of the main characteristics of community archives involves the relationship between group members and the activities they are sharing; therefore, the existence of community archives can play a significant role in supporting identity representation of communities since “community archives allow groups of people who may often be unrepresented or overlooked in their society to identify, explore and celebrate their own communities.”¹²⁰ However, community archives do not only exist to represent community identity; there are several more reasons for groups who share common interests to gather and have community archives. Therefore, this section will explore the aims and objectives of community archives.

In terms of the aims and objectives of community archives, Gilliland provides a fairly comprehensive list of motivations for members, particularly of marginalised communities, to create archives in that:

- 1) they wanted to have a voice;
- 2) they wanted to develop a community identity from inward and outward the communities such as communication, sharing, agenda organising, and networking;
- 3) it was a way advocate for social justice;
- 4) they wanted to keep records of evidence for the purpose of conflict resolution or post-conflict recovery;
- 5) they wanted to have a place to keep records of historical events significant to their community; and
- 6) they simply wanted to have recordkeeping for their community, e.g. for tracking rights and responsibilities and documenting land and property ownership.¹²¹

Flinn has observed that some communities have established community institutions or community archives because they aimed to keep their history and heritage whereas other

¹²⁰ Community Archives and Heritage Group. 2007. *Impact of community archives* (UK: CAHG), p.3

¹²¹ Gilliland, A.J. [2012]. *Voice, Identity, Activism (VIA): a community-centric framework for approaching archives and recordkeeping*

archives have resulted from other community activities.¹²² Moreover, political or cultural concern over the lack of representation in or marginalisation of some communities by traditional archives may be a motivation for people to create their own community space in which to keep their community heritage, to ensure their identity is represented in an acceptable manner. Lastly, people may simply want to share their interest in a place, occupation or other topic with each other; therefore, they establish a community-based archive.

Moreover, Flinn also pointed out that there were a number of reasons for the increase in the number of community archives, especially in the case of the UK, which included:

- rising concerns about absences and perhaps bias in traditional archives;
- de-industrialisation and migration and their consequent impact on population, economic and social changes;
- an increase in funding for the heritage sector, i.e. the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF); and
- technological developments enabling greater communication amongst geographically distant communities.¹²³

Discussion of power relates to the concept of ‘authority’. Authority involves power and control by a person who holds the right to speak and the heritage of the community, which is related to the discussion of heritage and history already mentioned in the previous section. Traditionally, public archives have had the authority to hold the records deemed significant to their designated community, but, as discussed, marginalised communities have felt mistrust for that authority and community archives have represented the community taking control of its own representation.¹²⁴

Further investigation on motivations for the establishment of community archives also revealed the important role of digital and technological development in their growth. The

¹²² Flinn, A. 2008. 'Archives and their communities: serving the people', *Comma*, 2008, pp.157-168

¹²³ Ibid.; Flinn, A. 2010. 'Independent Community Archives and Community-Generated Content: 'Writing, Saving and Sharing our Histories'', *Convergence: The International Journal of Research into New Media Technologies*, 16: 39-51

¹²⁴ Goodall, H. 2006. 'Karoo: Mates' -- Communities reclaim their images', *Aboriginal History*, 30, pp.48-66; Flinn, A., M. Stevens, and E. Shepherd. 2009. 'Whose memories, whose archives? Independent community archives, autonomy and the mainstream', *Archival Science*, 9, pp.71-86; Flinn, A., and E. Shepherd. 2011. 'Questions of trust (and distrust)', *Archival Science*, 11, pp.169-174

digital revolution, especially the availability of the internet from the 1990s, had transformed all aspects of life. The first generation of the internet (so-called Web 1.0) enabled a much broader spectrum of society to publish information; Web 2.0 has allowed greater interaction between publishers and consumers of information. An expansion of Web 2.0 has made significant changes to the world of communication again with the growth of social networking tools such as wikis, blogs, Flickr, Facebook, Twitter, YouTube or any other similar tools for sharing life events, work and education. Different professionals have applied '2.0' to represent their adoption of this technology with their work, such as history 2.0, library 2.0 or even in the archival field, e.g. participatory archives and archives 2.0.¹²⁵

The growth of ICT development, especially Web 2.0 and social networking tools, has also enabled ordinary people to control, manage, and disseminate their collections directly without waiting for traditional archivists to deal with these collections for them. Thus, community archives, which are derived from groups of ordinary people who have common interests, inevitably benefit from these technologies. The arising issues will be further explored in the following section, relationship with traditional archives.¹²⁶

PART 2: OVERVIEW OF LITERATURE

3.4 RELATIONSHIP WITH TRADITIONAL ARCHIVES

Much of the literature on community archives situates them in relation to traditional repositories, positioning them either in opposition, where they were motivated by the 'symbolic annihilation' of community identity in the mainstream organisations, or in different models of partnership.¹²⁷ The literature has also shown that the existence and growth of community archives has also affected archival practice in traditional repositories in other ways.

¹²⁵ Flinn, A. 2010. 'An attack on professionalism and scholarship?': Democratising Archives and the Production of Knowledge', *Ariadne: A Web & Print Magazine of Internet Issues for Librarians & Information Specialists*, 30; Theimer, K. 2011. 'What Is the Meaning of Archives 2.0?', *American Archivist*, 74, pp.58-68

¹²⁶ Flinn, A. 2010. 'Independent Community Archives and Community-Generated Content: 'Writing, Saving and Sharing our Histories'', *Convergence: The International Journal of Research into New Media Technologies*, 16, pp.39-51; Ketelaar, E. 2012. 'Cultivating archives: meanings and identities', *Archival Science*, 12, pp.19-33

¹²⁷ Caswell, M., M. Cifor, and M.H. Ramirez. 2016. "'To Suddenly Discover Yourself Existing': Uncovering the Impact of Community Archives', *American Archivist*, 79, pp.56-81

First, custody of the archives has challenged traditional ways of thinking about the relationship between archives and physical contents, firstly, because many of the collections of community archives were digital, and, secondly, because custody of physical holdings was the responsibility of the community, which might have no interest in – or be actively opposed to – depositing the materials in a traditional repository. Efforts on both sides to break down these barriers have created special forms of post-custodial models for community archives. Flinn, in his study, identified four forms of post-custodial models:

- 1) facilitative form of custody with support from the mainstream or public archives;
- 2) community archives transferring their custody to professional care;
- 3) relationships between the two via outreach activities by mainstream or public archives; and
- 4) custody is solely owned by the communities themselves.¹²⁸

Second, issues of democratisation and participatory or collaborative appraisal have been widely discussed in the literature, stemming from recognition that traditional practices resulted in the marginalisation of ethnicity, gender, sexuality, religious or any relevant social categories that were excluded or misrepresented in the mainstream or public archives.¹²⁹ Calls from community archives practitioners were normally for the inclusion of the marginalised identities within the history institutions of the communities in which they live.¹³⁰ This demand is from the bottom up and applies to both acquisition and appraisal policies.¹³¹ The democratisation and participatory methods have not only influenced archival development policies but they could also cover other archival practices such as participatory description, which involves describing materials relevant to particular communities in ways that are acceptable to the community, including involving community members in creating

¹²⁸ Flinn, A. 2007. 'Community Histories, Community Archives: Some Opportunities and Challenges', *Journal of the Society of Archivists*, 28, pp.151-176; Flinn, A. 2008. 'Archives and their communities: serving the people', *Comma*, 2008, pp.157-168

¹²⁹ Harris, V. 2002. 'The archival sliver: Power, memory, and archives in South Africa', *Archival Science*, 2, pp.63-86; Shilton, K., and R. Srinivasan. 2007. 'Participatory appraisal and arrangement for multicultural archival collections', *Archivaria*, 63, pp.87-101; Iacovino, L. 2015. 'Shaping and reshaping cultural identity and memory: maximising human rights through a participatory archive', *Archives and Manuscripts*, 43, pp.29-41

¹³⁰ McKemmish, S., S. Faulkhead, and L. Russell. 2011. 'Distrust in the archive: Reconciling records', *Archival Science*, 11, pp.211-239; Cook, T. 2013. 'Evidence, memory, identity, and community: Four shifting archival paradigms', *Archival Science*, 13, pp.95-120

¹³¹ Gilliland, A.J. 2014. 'Archival appraisal: practising on shifting sand', in Brown, C. (ed.) *Archives and recordkeeping: theory into practice* (London: Facet), pp.31-62

and implementing description policies.¹³² The recognition of ‘symbolic annihilation’ requires awareness and some degree of knowledge of the holdings of mainstream repositories, and changing collection practices requires repositories to have a collecting mandate and an obligation to be ‘representative’, both of which may be culturally specific.¹³³ This research aims to identify whether these factors are relevant from a community perspective.

3.5 PROVENANCE

The Society of American Archivists (SAA) Glossary defines provenance as “the origin or source of something or information regarding the origins, custody, and ownership of an item or collection”, with an attached note explaining that “provenance is a fundamental principle of archives, referring to the individual, family, or organization that created or received the items in a collection. The principle of provenance or the *respect des fonds* dictates that records of different origins (provenance) be kept separate to preserve their context.”¹³⁴

In archival practice, provenance is normally applied in relation to appraisal, arrangement and description because archivists use information and/or knowledge about provenance to appraise the fonds and describe them. Provenance is related to content and context of the archives. Traditionally, appraisal methods had been developed and guided by government or university archivists, whose archives are the product of administrative, public, research, and documentary functions. There have been a number of attempts by Western archivists to develop appropriate strategies to deal with archives resulting from those mentioned functions, such as the Schellenberg method, documentation strategy, and macroappraisal. With post-colonialism, post-modernism and the digital revolution, archivists and recordkeeping professionals started to be aware of the wider range of archival materials such as those related to colonial and indigenous documentation, self-documentation by marginalised groups, e.g. by religion, gender or ethnicity, and the increase in digital materials. All these required the rethinking of archival priorities and processes. These materials were no longer solely obtained and selected by mainstream archivists or recordkeeping professionals, and models

¹³² Flinn, A. 2010. "An attack on professionalism and scholarship?": Democratising Archives and the Production of Knowledge', *Ariadne: A Web & Print Magazine of Internet Issues for Librarians & Information Specialists*, 30

¹³³ Caswell, M., M. Cifor, and M.H. Ramirez. 2016. "'To Suddenly Discover Yourself Existing': Uncovering the Impact of Community Archives", *American Archivist*, 79, pp.56-81

¹³⁴ Pearce-Moses, R. 2005. *A Glossary of Archival and Records Terminology: definition of provenance* (Chicago: Society of American Archivists)

characterised as ‘post-custodial’ were formulated to cover archives maintained outside traditional repositories, including by creator communities.¹³⁵ Relevant discussion regarding provenance in the context of community archives can involve issues of post-colonialism especially related to changing of professional roles, since the content and context of archives have become more complex than existing only to serve the purpose of administrative, public, research and documentation which informed traditional practice, which tended to treat the appraisal process from the top down and lacked the context in which to describe the process.¹³⁶ In her review of the literature on appraisal, Gilliland has argued that recent literature has focused on issues of changes in professional roles, especially for those working in the mainstream institutions, to encompass materials from the marginalised groups as well as the requirement to provide details of provenance throughout their transactional processes without any limit to only the first creator, since appraisal is the archival principle that will enable the archival profession to promote “a greater diversity of user groups and uses”.¹³⁷ Moreover, the “parallel provenance”, “societal provenance”, “ethnic provenance” and “provenance of place” were introduced by the Western scholarship to emphasise the importance of re-defining the provenance principle for better social cohesion.¹³⁸

3.6 SUSTAINABILITY

Existing literature has also identified some challenges to the ongoing existence of community archives. For instance, Flinn had discussed the challenges that were drawn from an ethnographic study on four community archives in London. He suggested from the study that: “At the heart of these challenges lies the question of access to resources (financial, human, physical, skills, and expertise) and how a lack of resources hinders the archive’s growth and ability to develop in the future.”¹³⁹ Moreover, Newman had interviewed community archive

¹³⁵ Cook, T. 2013. 'Evidence, memory, identity, and community: Four shifting archival paradigms', *Archival Science*, 13, pp.95-120

¹³⁶ Cook, T. 2011. "We Are What We Keep; We Keep What We Are": Archival Appraisal Past, Present and Future', *Journal of the Society of Archivists*, 32, pp.173-189; Hughes, K. 2014. 'Appraisal as Cartography: Cultural Studies in the Archives', *American Archivist*, 77, pp.270-296

¹³⁷ Gilliland, A.J. 2014. 'Archival appraisal: practising on shifting sand', in Brown, C. (ed.) *Archives and recordkeeping: theory into practice* (London: Facet), pp. 31-62, (54)

¹³⁸ Hurley, C. 2005. 'Parallel Provenance (if these are your records, where are your stories?)', pp.1-43; Wurl, J. 2005. 'Ethnicity as Provenance: In Search of Values and Principles for Documenting the Immigrant Experience', 29:1, pp.65-76; Nesmith, T. 2006. 'The concept of societal provenance and records of nineteenth-century Aboriginal-European relations in Western Canada: Implications for archival theory and practice', *Archival Science*, 6, pp.351-360; Bastian, J.A. 2006. 'Reading Colonial Records Through an Archival Lens: The Provenance of Place, Space and Creation', *Archival Science*, 6, pp.267-284

¹³⁹ Flinn, A. 2011. *Archival activism: independent and community-led archives, radical public history and the heritage professions* (California: eScholarship, University of California), p.13-14.

professions from four institutions in NZ and identified common factors that had significant impacts on the sustainability of community archives, which included collections (the nature of them), archivist (their character), and external support. These criteria are related to areas including governance, funding, staff skills, collaboration, dynamic approach, preservation, archival practices, community engagement, collections, the archivists and external support, e.g. local government.¹⁴⁰ Those challenges that were frequently addressed in previous studies involved lack of resources such as funding, staff, skills and experts; and the sustainable future of the community archives was normally at risk if long-term solutions for the challenges could not be managed. However, studies on the sustainability of community archives are limited and further research is needed. Some recommendations have been made to support or provide guidance for the community archives that might encounter these challenges; for instance, seeking other sources of financial support from the initial short-term project funding, and/or collaborating with other archives – either public or other independent archives – to share their practices together, e.g. preservation.¹⁴¹ However, these recommendations may be specific to the context within which they were made and may not be appropriate in other countries such as Thailand.

3.6.1 FUNDING

As previously stated, Flinn identified that one of the reasons for the growth in numbers of community archives, especially in the UK, came from the increased availability of funding opportunities such as the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF).¹⁴² Since 1994, the HLF has supported more than 36,500 projects across the UK using more than £6 billion of lottery funding.¹⁴³ After 1997, the HLF began to prioritise projects with community impact and enabled communities to apply for funding in their own right as part of the social inclusion agenda called “good causes” which included arts, charity, heritage, sports, health, education and environment.¹⁴⁴ For example, the research case studies completed by Flinn and his team included ‘Moroccan Memories’, a project first established from fixed project funding and

¹⁴⁰ Newman, J. 2011. 'Sustaining Community Archives', *Aplis*, 24, p.41

¹⁴¹ Jura Consultants. March 2009. *Community archives and the sustainable communities agenda: final report*, pp.65-66; Flinn, A. 2011. *Archival activism: independent and community-led archives, radical public history and the heritage professions* (California: eScholarship, University of California)

¹⁴² Flinn, A. 2007. 'Community Histories, Community Archives: Some Opportunities and Challenges', *Journal of the Society of Archivists*, 28, p.159

¹⁴³ Figure shown on the date of this report written. (Retrieved from http://www.hlf.org.uk/aboutus/Pages/AboutUs.aspx#.U_xdPPmwJtU, 27 August 2014)

¹⁴⁴ Ray, L., E. Shepherd, A. Flinn, E. Ander, and M. Laperdrix. 2013. 'Funding archive services in England and Wales: institutional realities and professional perceptions', *Archives and Records*, 34, pp.178-179

then set up as a foundation in order to carry on with their work from additional funding sources.¹⁴⁵

3.6.2 CONTENT

Content is “the intellectual substance of a document, including text, data, symbols, numerals, images, and sound.”¹⁴⁶ This definition, provided by the SAA glossary, may mainly refer to content as one of the elements of a ‘record’. However, the definition of community archives allows a broader interpretation for the groups to identify their own collections and other characteristics of their archives. If interpreting from this meaning of a record’s content, content for community archives is therefore materials contained in the archives or the collections maintained by the institutions, and the evidential, informational, symbolic and affective content of those materials.

Traditional archives appear to preserve more textual records considering that Western records created for evidential purposes have general “enduring value” for printed or handwritten document.¹⁴⁷ However, community archives by definition are more flexible in terms of their content because the decision of what to keep in them is truly based on agreement between community members. The CAHG report suggested that the collections that could be found or held by community archives might comprise photographs, documents and oral histories; whereas Flinn suggests an even broader range of content, including “collection of material objects, paper and digital records, audio-visual materials and personal testimonies.”¹⁴⁸ Moreover, community archives may have contents based on location, subject or activity such as those on the website of the CAHG, which list trade and industry, minority and ethnic communities, and black as the top three subjects; and online catalogue, oral history, and heritage centre as the top three activities.¹⁴⁹

¹⁴⁵ Flinn, A. 2011. *Archival activism: independent and community-led archives, radical public history and the heritage professions* (California: eScholarship, University of California)

¹⁴⁶ Pearce-Moses, R. 2005. *A Glossary of Archival and Records Terminology: definition of content* (Chicago: Society of American Archivists)

¹⁴⁷ Rylance, K. Fall 2006. 'Archives and the intangible', *Archivaria*, 62, p.104

¹⁴⁸ Community Archives and Heritage Group. 2007. *Impact of community archives* (UK: CAHG); Flinn, A. 2007. 'Community Histories, Community Archives: Some Opportunities and Challenges', *Journal of the Society of Archivists*, 28, p.153

¹⁴⁹ Investigated from <http://www.communityarchives.org.uk/organisations-subject>; and <http://www.communityarchives.org.uk/organisation-activity>, retrieved 1 November 2016.

Community archives, whose aim is to support collective memory, can have content that is even more inclusive than traditional textual archives. Cultural events such as performances, parades, celebrations and commemorations could be in forms of different expressions, e.g. songs, dance and oral tradition. There is debate within the literature on community archives as to whether community archiving practices have to involve physical collections. For instance, Flinn, Stevens and Shepherd argued that “heritage objects, including archives, are not the collective memories of nations or communities ...that is not the same as saying the archives equate directly with memory”, whereas Bastian indicated that the characteristics of a post-colonial archive that could identify cultural expressions such as dance, ritual and celebration should be as important as the traditional text.¹⁵⁰ These heritage or cultural activities should be taken into account as the documents or evidence of the community’s events as well as other typical textual archives, as the aim of this research is to consider both perspectives in terms of the research design.¹⁵¹

3.7 REDEFINITION OF PROFESSIONAL ROLE

As discussed, Western literature on community archives has tended to situate them in opposition to traditional archives, offering a challenge with which professional archivists have been encouraged to engage, both to re-imagine professional practice and to support the ongoing development of community archives.

Scholars including Flinn and Gilliland and Caswell who emphasise the origin of community archives in campaigns for social justice or activism argue that traditional or mainstream archivists need to become more ‘activist’ in order to make archives more inclusive by holding records of marginalised groups as well as those representing more dominant perspectives.¹⁵² Different approaches have been suggested, such as expanding collecting practices or establishing partnerships between the traditional and community-based archives,

¹⁵⁰ Flinn, A., M. Stevens, and E. Shepherd. 2009. 'Whose memories, whose archives? Independent community archives, autonomy and the mainstream', *Archival Science*, 9, pp.71-86; Bastian, J.A. 2013. 'The records of memory, the archives of identity: Celebrations, texts and archival sensibilities', *Archival Science*, 13, pp.127

¹⁵¹ Bastian, J.A. 2009. "Play mas': carnival in the archives and the archives in carnival: records and community identity in the US Virgin Islands', *Archival Science*, 9, pp.113-125

¹⁵² Flinn, A. 2010. "An attack on professionalism and scholarship?": Democratising Archives and the Production of Knowledge', *Ariadne: A Web & Print Magazine of Internet Issues for Librarians & Information Specialists*, 30; Gilliland, A.J., and M. Caswell. 2016. 'Records and their imaginaries: imagining the impossible, making possible the imagined', *Archival Science*, 16, pp.53-75

in order to support each other on custodianship or archival practices.¹⁵³ Diana Wakimoto, Christine Bruce and Helen Partridge have suggested that partnership could also support community archivists via training a new generation or volunteers to help or replace them when needed.¹⁵⁴ However, the desirability of archival activism by mainstream professionals has been contested by Michael Greene, whilst some scholars, such as Paschild, have argued that the community archives themselves should maintain an appropriate balance between the areas of identity emphasis and their archival practices.¹⁵⁵ The argument is that those activist community archives should not focus only on identity issues so they forget that archival pragmatics such as preservation are no less important than the former: balance will ensure the sustainability of the community archives. Again, all this discussion implies the existence of a well-functioning system of public archive staffed by professional archivists. How does it pertain to contexts where the boundaries between professional and non-professional may be blurred, where there is no identifiable profession, or the concept of professionalism in recordkeeping is in its infancy?

PART 3: COMMUNITY ARCHIVE THEORY

3.8 COMMUNITY ARCHIVE PRACTICE

Having throughout the chapter discussed various issues related to community archives, this section will illustrate some examples of models for community archive practice including for custody, appraisal and cataloguing. Three practical models will be discussed altogether as they have some overlaps.

3.8.1 MODELS OF RESEARCH ON COMMUNITY ARCHIVES

Having reviewed the published research on community archives, it was found useful to categorise the outputs as follows:

¹⁵³ Gray, V. 2008. "Who's that Knocking on Our Door?": Archives, Outreach and Community', *Journal of the Society of Archivists*, 29, pp.1-8; Flinn, A. 2010. "An attack on professionalism and scholarship?": Democratising Archives and the Production of Knowledge', *Ariadne: A Web & Print Magazine of Internet Issues for Librarians & Information Specialists*, 30

¹⁵⁴ Wakimoto, D., C. Bruce, and H. Partridge. 2013. 'Archivist as activist: lessons from three queer community archives in California', *Archival Science*, 13, pp.293-316

¹⁵⁵ Greene, M.A. 2008. *The Power of Archives: Archivists' Values and Value in the Post-Modern Age*; Paschild, C.N. 2012. 'Community Archives and the Limitations of Identity: Considering Discursive Impact on Material Needs', *American Archivist*, 75, pp.125-142

3.8.1.1 Studies that research meaning and interpretation of terminology related to the area of community archives. This type of research is often literature-based with some examples from the researchers' experience of places, events, people, or items related to the topics being discussed. Articles by Bastian and Ketelaar are examples of this type of scholarship, in which their discussion may associate community archives with archives as cultural heritage, collective memory of community and relationship between community archives, and community identities.¹⁵⁶

3.8.1.2 The overarching research on community archives that provides the general idea about the field of study, for instance, those articles by Flinn and his research team that discussed their first research project conducted with community archives in the London area. These pieces of research were amongst the first studies that started the debate about community archives, especially in the UK, and can be associated with the foundation of the CAHG. Their methods were ethnographic and they used interviews and participatory research with the community to approach their research. Using ethnography was claimed to be a rare approach in community archive research.¹⁵⁷

¹⁵⁶ Bastian, J.A. 2006. 'Reading Colonial Records Through an Archival Lens: The Provenance of Place, Space and Creation', *Archival Science*, 6, pp.267-284; Bastian, J.A. 2009. 'Play mas': carnival in the archives and the archives in carnival: records and community identity in the US Virgin Islands', *Archival Science*, 9, pp.113-125; Bastian, J.A. 2013. 'The records of memory, the archives of identity: Celebrations, texts and archival sensibilities', *Archival Science*, 13, pp.121-131; Ketelaar, E. 2012. 'Cultivating archives: meanings and identities', *Archival Science*, 12, pp.19-33; Ketelaar, E. 2014. 'Archives, memories and identities', in Brown, C. (ed.) *Archives and recordkeeping: theory into practice* (London: Facet), pp.131-170

¹⁵⁷ Flinn, A. 2008. 'Other ways of thinking, other ways of being. Documenting the margins and the transitory: What to preserve, how to collect', in Craven, L. (ed.) *What are archives? Cultural and theoretical perspectives: a reader* (Hampshire: Ashgate Publishing), pp.109-128; Flinn, A. 2007. 'Community Histories, Community Archives: Some Opportunities and Challenges', *Journal of the Society of Archivists*, 28, pp.151-176; Flinn, A. 2011. *Archival activism: independent and community-led archives, radical public history and the heritage professions* (California: eScholarship, University of California); Flinn, A., M. Stevens, and E. Shepherd. 2009. 'Whose memories, whose archives? Independent community archives, autonomy and the mainstream', *Archival Science*, 9, pp.71-86; Flinn, A. 2010. 'An attack on professionalism and scholarship?': Democratising Archives and the Production of Knowledge', *Ariadne: A Web & Print Magazine of Internet Issues for Librarians & Information Specialists*, 30; Flinn, A. 2010. 'Independent Community Archives and Community-Generated Content: 'Writing, Saving and Sharing our Histories'', *Convergence: The International Journal of Research into New Media Technologies*, 16, pp.39-51; Flinn, A. 2008. 'Archives and their communities: serving the people', *Comma*, 2008, pp.157-168; Flinn, A., and E. Shepherd. 2011. 'Questions of trust (and distrust)', *Archival Science*, 11, pp.169-174; Stevens, M., A. Flinn, and E. Shepherd. 2010. 'New frameworks for community engagement in the archive sector: from handing over to handing on', *International Journal of Heritage Studies*, 16: 59-76

3.8.1.3 Lastly, research studies that focus on particular topics related to the field of community archives such as ownership and custody (Flinn); cataloguing (Newman, 2012); activism and identity (Gilliland; Caswell); and sustainability (Newman, 2011).¹⁵⁸

This chapter has provided a literature review on community archives from the debates amongst Western scholarship that contains three main parts: historical overview of the community archives movement, overview of literature concerning emerging themes within community archival studies, and community archive theory. The discussion in this chapter provides the fundamental establishment of knowledge for the research methodology and design to be discussed in the next chapter.

¹⁵⁸ Flinn, A., and E. Shepherd. 2011. 'Questions of trust (and distrust)', *Archival Science*, 11, pp.169-174; Newman, J. 2012. 'Revisiting Archive Collections: Developing Models for Participatory Cataloguing', *Journal of the Society of Archivists*, 33, pp.57-73; Newman, J. 2011. 'Sustaining Community Archives', *Aplis*, 24, pp.37-45; Gilliland, A.J. [2012]. *Voice, Identity, Activism (VIA): a community-centric framework for approaching archives and recordkeeping*; Caswell, M. 2014. 'Toward a survivor-centered approach to records documenting human rights abuse: lessons from community archives', *Archival Science*, 14, pp.307-322.

CHAPTER 4

METHODOLOGY

4.1 RESEARCH DESIGN

The research question has already been explained and justified in Chapter 1 and this chapter will discuss the methodology that has been designed to answer it. Therefore, it is necessary to repeat the research question of this study:

How do Thai communities document and preserve their heritage and to what extent is the Western concept and model of community archives appropriate to a Thai context?

The above research question informs the aims of this study, which include:

- 1) to use Western literature to establish a working definition of community archives and to investigate this concept;
- 2) to investigate community-based heritage activities in the Isan province of Thailand through the lens of community archives as defined by Western literature;
- 3) to examine heritage documentation applied by Thai communities by focusing on four investigation criteria: 1) collection or action, 2) ownership and management, 3) activities and participation, and 4) communication and time;
- 4) to investigate the commonalities and differences between the findings of Western literature with the findings from fieldwork research on Thai communities; and
- 5) to identify whether Western community archive models (both theoretical and practical) are applicable in a Thai context and whether they are helpful.

Therefore, based on these aims it is clear that any research conclusions should be drawn from the perspectives of the community members. A qualitative methodology appeared to be more suitable than a quantitative approach to meet the aim of acquiring different perspectives from individuals within communities. Qualitative research is different from quantitative because it “tends to be associated with the idea that social life is the product of social interaction and the beliefs of actors, that the social world is not populated by things, but by relationships and

actions.”¹⁵⁹ There is also a variety of approaches to qualitative research, such as field studies, ethnographies, action research, grounded theory, and phenomenological sociological research.¹⁶⁰

The present research project was designed to identify and select case studies of communities in Thailand to gain observational evidence of their heritage management, in order to analyse them, both on their own terms and in relation to the findings of the literature. It was decided that the study should be based on an in-depth study of a limited number of cases, therefore the processes involved a number of filtering phases to ensure that the number of case studies would be consistent with the timeframe of the PhD project. This also allowed the researcher to gain sufficient qualitative data from the field research in order to have an adequate, albeit not fully representative, picture of community archives in a Thai context. The study by Diana Wakimoto, Debra Hansen, and Christine Bruce showed that an oral history interview approach with the key persons of a community archive that represent the queer community, as well as documentary research, had enabled the research team to be able to articulate the key issues they aimed to investigate. These included space, budget and staff, collecting and collection development, description and access, and sustainability.¹⁶¹ Although their study focused on a single case study, the decision to have four case studies for this particular research was based on the use of a framework derived from the literature associated with community archives (to ensure comparability), convenience (to ensure practical feasibility) and a ‘Phase One’ (to ensure the willingness of community members to participate in the research). (See further discussion in Sampling and ‘Phase One’ section, pages 70 - 72.)

Given the nature of this research and the implications of its research methods, the researcher considered interpretivism to be the most appropriate means to approach the data derived from this project. The reasons for this are given in the following section.¹⁶²

¹⁵⁹ David, M., and C.D. Sutton. 2004. *Social research: the basics* (London: SAGE), p. 36

¹⁶⁰ Baker, T.L. 1999. *Doing social research* (London: McGraw-Hill), pp.240 – 42

¹⁶¹ Wakimoto, D., D. Hansen, and C. Bruce. 2013. 'The Case of LLACE: Challenges, Triumphs, and Lessons of a Community Archives', *American Archivist*, 76, pp.438-457

¹⁶² The characteristics were taken from Pickard, A.J. 2013. *Research methods in information* (Chicago: Neal-Schuman), p. 7 of which adapted from Lincoln, Y.S. and E.G Guba. 1985. *Naturalistic inquiry*. (London and Newbury Park, CA: SAGE)

CHARACTERISTICS OF INTERPRETIVISM

1) ONTOLOGICAL STANCE

‘Relativist’

“Belief in multiple, constructed realities that cannot exist outside the social contexts that create them. Realities vary in nature and are time and context bound.”¹⁶³

DISCUSSION ON APPROPRIATENESS FOR THIS RESEARCH

It is a starting point of this research that the definition of ‘community archives’ is a relative one, which has been tied up with various equally relativist concepts, such as activism, heritage and identity preservation or simply nostalgic remembrance. This perspective is derived from findings of Western literature, which from their context may be more concerned with these issues and the concept of ‘community archives’ as a category, with pre-defined features. It may therefore have much to do with external parties’ need for such a category, rather than the participants’ need. The different contextual factors in Thailand need to be understood as far as possible on their own terms in order to assess the relevance of Western-derived concepts and categories to future research and practice in this area. Therefore, the researcher believes that any findings from the fieldwork investigation should be understood in relation to the context of the studied subjects such as the environment, beliefs, social norms, education or the personal experience of the individuals and in particular communities.

Moreover, language is one of the ways in which ‘reality’ is constructed; therefore, the existence of the term ‘community archives’ in the West has established a category, within which many potentially very different organisations can be grouped and studied as a coherent phenomenon. There is now no possibility of going back in time to find out how they described their activities and collections prior to the creation of the category. In Thailand, however, the position is different as this category is not explicit and thus one expected outcome of this study is to establish whether the individual case studies are sufficiently similar for a single classification to be useful. One way to achieve this is to establish whether each has a shared language for defining their activities.

¹⁶³ Ibid., p.7

2) EPISTEMOLOGICAL STANCE

‘Transactional / subjectivist’:

“The results of the investigation are the consequence of interaction between the subject and the investigator.”¹⁶⁴

DISCUSSION ON APPROPRIATENESS FOR THIS RESEARCH

As previously mentioned, the aim of this study is to investigate the research subjects’ perspectives of their heritage preservation based on a qualitative approach. Therefore, it is apparent that the research techniques must be designed to allow the researcher to gain adequate data that will enable the participants to articulate their own perceptions. These techniques must also ensure that the data remains comparable across the case studies and against the literature.

It is recognised that power is involved in all human interactions; however, the interviewees were given the opportunity to express themselves in their own terms, without direction from the interviewer. The interviewer self-identifies as having the same ethnic identity as most of the interviewees and as a younger female would be unlikely to be considered to be speaking from a position of greater power in relation to many of the interviewees, who were older and male.

3) METHODOLOGICAL STANCE

‘Empathetic interaction’:

“Investigator interacts with the object of the investigation. Each construction of reality is investigated in its own right and is interpreted by the investigator.”¹⁶⁵

DISCUSSION ON APPROPRIATENESS FOR THIS RESEARCH

All four case studies are different in themselves; therefore, interaction with representative individuals from each community has to be different to a certain extent. Although the consistency of the research questions has been taken into account by focusing them on the same themes, the results derived from the data gathered will be different due to the uniqueness of each community and individual identities.

¹⁶⁴ Ibid., p.7

¹⁶⁵ Ibid., p.7

4) PURPOSE

‘Understanding / reconstruction’

‘Transfer of findings’¹⁶⁶

DISCUSSION ON APPROPRIATENESS FOR THIS RESEARCH

With the limitation of only four case studies, the researcher cannot claim that they are representative of all community heritage organisations in Thailand. However, the results yielded from this study will be complemented with the literature findings in order to inform future research and practice in the Thai context. The studied communities’ concept and definition of ‘community archives’ will be understood through the identification of their perspectives and associated meanings. This also has the potential to widen the understanding of these concepts more generally.

4.2 QUALITATIVE METHODOLOGY

Qualitative research is sometimes referred to as ‘field research’ because qualitative research projects mostly focus on a particular environment or field to understand it better. As suggested by Theresa L. Baker, the main focus of ‘qualitative field research’ is to understand any social unit such as a group, organisation or community managing themselves in their own ways without (or with little) interference from the researcher.¹⁶⁷ Observation is the most common technique used by qualitative field researchers, who generally immerse themselves within the studied units and carefully observe their day-to-day life. Interviewing techniques are also used to obtain more data from the participants in addition to taking field notes; through these researchers develop their understanding of the meanings of an environment and the individuals living within it. Having identified qualitative strategies as being most appropriate for the present research, various research techniques such as interview, observation, photographic recording and field notes were used. Further details of these methods are provided in section 2.2 Data collection techniques and research instruments.

Interviews were undertaken in a semi-structured format, using both closed and open-ended questions. The questions were designed to conform with the working definition of community archive established in Chapter 3 The Community Archives Movement and the

¹⁶⁶ Ibid., p.7

¹⁶⁷ Baker, T.L. 1999. *Doing social research* (London: McGraw-Hill), p.8

frameworks of previous studies. The closed questions were intended to gather information about the participants' backgrounds, who they were, what they did for the subject community, organisation or event, and included other simple factual 'yes' or 'no' questions that they could answer immediately without having to provide lengthy explanations. Open-ended questions required participants to give longer responses and they were used to encourage the respondent to reflect on the nature of their project. The questions were designed to provide data on the four main areas already mentioned:

- 1) definition of community and motivations for establishment of community archives
- 2) ownership and management
- 3) activities and participation
- 4) communication and time.

Each core and subordinate question had a specific rationale, which will be described in detail in Appendix C (pages 358 – 364). It is necessary to note that although some questions categorised under the same themes were asked differently because of the nature of the case study or the individual being interviewed, they were designed to gain answers in relation to the same objectives.

Observation techniques were intended to supplement the interviews, especially to examine the archival processes by the people responsible in each community, organisation or collection. The main issues to be investigated by observation related to 1) ownership and management and 2) activities and participation.

These are the areas that the researcher wanted to investigate further using both semi-structured interview questions and observation:

- 1) Ownership and management of community heritage
 - 1.1) Decision making on the collections / events
 - 1.2) Power within community or organisation
- 2) Activities and participation
 - 2.1) Documenting practices / standardisation
 - 2.2) Collaboration / risk management

It is worth noting that the ‘observation’ conducted in the present research project should not be understood as a full ethnographic observational approach, which might be a misunderstanding that occurs due to this method being part of the case study. This is because the researcher’s time was limited so she was only able to stay in each community for a short length of time. Having been aware of the advantages of the ethnographic approach, which normally involves the ethnographers living with the researched social units and sometimes requires participant observation in order to obtain in-depth analysis, this study adapted ethnography with the case study approach. This enabled the researcher to gain the benefits of the detailed data collection whilst the observations were designed to be flexible depending on the differences in each community’s circumstances. For instance, observation took place after or along with the interviews if that was more convenient for the research participants, rather than allowing the researcher to observe them every day or more frequently. Observation of key public events such as at the DS community’s annual festival might take several days.

Moreover, the methods of festival observation suggested by Bastian were also taken into account whilst designing the techniques to gain information from the communities. She argued that there must be deep knowledge of core cultural events in order to ‘truly document any community’. She gave the example of the St. Thomas carnival that consisted of a range of activities; in order to understand the carnival procedures, a researcher needed to spend an adequate time observing activities going on in the research field. This would normally involve meetings with community members for interviews as well as participant observations that could take weeks or a year.¹⁶⁸ In this case, the researcher was not aiming to document the festivities themselves but to acquire adequate information in order to understand the points made about them by the interview subjects and to gather data on issues of community involvement. Therefore it was decided that a shorter time frame would be possible.

Furthermore, having designed the research methods to involve observation, the researcher was fully aware that there might not be any specifically archival activities being undertaken during the field visit. Therefore, observation had to be conducted in relation to other aspects of community heritage engagement such as regular religious rituals of the holy days. Field notes and photographs were planned to be the means for recording the observation.

¹⁶⁸ Bastian, J.A. 2013. 'The records of memory, the archives of identity: Celebrations, texts and archival sensibilities', *Archival Science*, 13, pp.121-131

Having discussed the methods of data capture, the next section will explain the choice of case studies.

4.2.1 SAMPLING AND ‘PHASE ONE’

The selection of the case studies was firstly based on convenience as the researcher chose cases in the region where she comes from for the reason that she was already familiar with the culture. The selection of the case studies was purposive, made on the basis of ‘a priori criteria’, using a framework specifically developed for the selection. The researcher assessed all of the potential cases against those criteria before she narrowed them down to four cases. These consisted of:

- 1) The MC Cultural Home,
- 2) The TM Community,
- 3) The DS Community, and
- 4) The GAL.

Further details of the different stages of the case studies selection process can be referred to in Appendix A (pages 314 - 341). Nevertheless, those different procedures are worth briefly discussing here in order to understand this particular procedure of the research methodology, especially how potential case studies were chosen and finalised into the four case studies as well as ‘Phase One’. This was also an important step in the feasibility study of the potential case studies taken in July 2013 before the actual field trip research was conducted between June and September 2014.

The primary literature review suggested that there was a database created as a result of the study by the Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn Anthropology Centre (SAC) that provided a collective list of local institutions in Thailand. It demonstrated the existence of community resources spreading around the country organised by content, ownership/management, region, and province; therefore, information provided in this database was taken as the first step toward the selection of potential case studies. Furthermore, the potential case studies were also narrowed down by region, specifically to the Northeast (Isan) region, due to the researcher’s familiarity with the culture and the practicality for the data collection plan e.g. ease of access to the communities and time limitations. Moreover, information provided by

the SAC database, including ownership, content, and especially descriptions were considerably significant enough to support decision making based on an analysis of the potential case studies. The descriptions were consequently coded and interpreted to examine and reaffirm the potential case studies as being community archive-alike, as suggested by the Western concept of community archives. After all of these steps had been completed, eleven potential case studies were listed and it is necessary to note that some of them were serendipitously found during the study of the SAC database, relevant documents, the map of the Isan region as well as other community institutions in 'Phase One'. (See a list of the eleven potential case studies on page 318; coding and interpretation of the descriptions on page 319 - 328).

It is necessary to note that two particular community archive frameworks had been consulted and a framework had been developed based on them, to be used during the selection of the case studies and methodological framework, as well as to supplement discussions in different chapters throughout this thesis. The developed framework was based on the works of Gilliland and Newman.¹⁶⁹ (See further discussion in Appendix A, pages 314 - 341)

This developed framework was used to support the next step, 'Phase One', which was undertaken to assess the feasibility of the field research for the case studies. Since the aforementioned steps in the previous paragraphs were planned with no possibility of visiting those potential case studies beforehand, this particular 'Phase One' was included to ensure that participation would be agreed by the communities and/or individuals responsible for the heritage institutions of the eleven potential case studies. The researcher had a list of some key contacts based on information in the SAC database and relevant resources; other communities were immediately accessed without prior contact because they were serendipitously found along the way to other institutions. The researcher spent one month making short visits to each community institution. Those eleven potential case studies were located in seven different provinces altogether, including Surin, Loei, Ubon Ratchathani, Yasothon, Roi-et, Khon Kaen and Kalasin. At each place, the researcher held an informal interview with the key persons or member of the community to identify who, what, and how community institutions had been managed. These interviews were based on guidelines for

¹⁶⁹ Newman, J. 2011. 'Sustaining Community Archives', *Aplis*, 24, pp.37-45; Gilliland, A.J. [2012]. *Voice, Identity, Activism (VIA): a community-centric framework for approaching archives and recordkeeping*

relevant questions suggested from the developed framework (see pages 329 - 331). The researcher recorded the interviews and made as many notes as she could. After 'Phase One', the interview data was examined against the developed framework in order to finalise the case studies and only four remained at the end. (See table on pages 332 - 339 'Finalising the Selection to Four Case Studies').

4.2.1.1 BRIEF INTRODUCTION OF EACH CASE STUDY

The researcher decided to use acronyms to refer to each case study and the names of the interviewees were replaced by pseudonyms in order to conform with the University's ethics policy. However, this requirement of anonymity is problematic for research that is conducted in different cultural contexts such as this study, since most key informants could be easily identified through the internet from their affiliation. Nevertheless, they were mostly willing to present their statuses as the cultural representatives of the communities. The researcher respected the university policies but was aware of the aforementioned risk of unintentional disclosure.

CASE STUDY 1: MC CULTURAL HOME

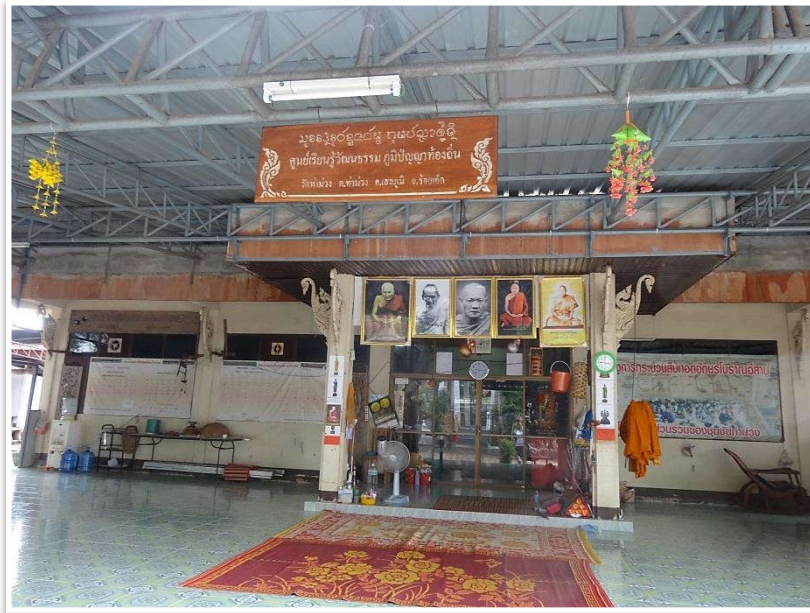


Picture 1: Front of the MC Cultural Home building

MC Cultural Home is located in Manchakhiri district, Khon Kaen province. The MC Cultural Home is in the district town centre and it was established by MC SRS, an individual collector who was a retired primary teacher. MC SRS was a native to the Manchakhiri community and he was respected by members of the community as an expert in local history. He was also interested in local textiles and had played a significant role in the development and promotion of the textiles produced using techniques unique to the region. MC SRS started his collections from his personal interest in antiques and local history. Thereafter he began to merge his inherited traditional-styled houses, which he transformed into a private museum and repository of his collections. The collections held by him consisted of some photographs passed on from his family, equipment and tools donated or acquired from the villagers of the communities he had visited around the areas of Manchakhiri district, palmleaf manuscripts and excavated pottery rescued from the temple believed to be one of the earliest occupied sites in the district, textiles collected from villagers and recently produced based on his designs, and other items.

MC Cultural Home was selected as one of the case studies mainly because it was managed by an individual collector. Although this criterion for selection was unlikely to correspond with the ‘community archive’ definition according to which the focus should be on community engagement, the researcher learned from ‘Phase One’ that some individual collectors of community heritage appeared to play a significant role in community activities. Therefore, she selected this as a case of management by an individual collector, as a contrast to the other case studies, in order to gain a better understanding on this aspect of Thai community heritage documentation.

CASE STUDY 2: TM COMMUNITY



Picture 2: Terrace of an abbot's house at the Tha Temple of TM community where most community heritage activities took place such as the conservation of palmleaf manuscripts and the revival of Tai Noi and Dharma languages used in inscription of the palmleaf manuscripts and amongst community members in the past

TM community is a village community located in Roi-et province. Geographically, TM community is located close to Roi-et city centre as well as the two neighbouring districts. Moreover, it is adjacent to the main university of the province. These related geographic factors had influenced the development of the TM community to be a so-called hybrid community since, although it had a consistently modern approach, 'Phase One' suggested that an important characteristic of the TM community was its maintenance of its traditional practices, along with the attempt to re-create new customs to strengthen community cooperation.¹⁷⁰ Therefore, the TM community became one of the case studies in order to investigate the strategies they have used to maintain their community heritage.

¹⁷⁰ The use of term 'hybrid community' may be found mostly in the field of communication especially to refer to the interaction of people through both online and offline mediums, such as the definition suggested by Gaved and Mulholland, (Gaved, M., and P. Mulholland. 2005. *Grassroots initiated networked communities: a study of hybrid physical/virtual communities*, p.2). Nevertheless, the use of this term in the context of this paragraph for TM community is more related to the concept of 'hybridity' discussed in Anthropology, Sociology and History disciplines which involves cultural hybridity. For instance, the discussion of four cultural responses to cultural exchange includes acceptance, rejection, segregation and adaption (this view was proposed by Peter Burke but mentioned in Ackermann, A. 2012. 'Cultural hybridity: between metaphor and empiricism', in Stockhammer, P.W. (ed.) *Conceptualizing cultural hybridization [electronic book]: a transdisciplinary approach* (Heidelberg: Springer), p.21), in which the TM community may be expressed in terms of segregation and adaptation. As

During ‘Phase One’, the researcher only learned about activities related to the conservation of palmleaf manuscripts and the revival of traditional languages. However, more activities related to community-based heritage management emerged from the field research; for instance, the collections of TM CLD at the village primary school established by him before his retirement, and temple collections at the Forest temple, one amongst three temples of the community, which were held by TM SOS, the current abbot at the time that the data collection took place.

CASE STUDY 3: DS COMMUNITY



Picture 3: A procession of the spiritual leader, DS CPG, and his team during the Boon Luang Festival, the main annual festival of the DS community.

could be seen in the above picture, this temple is clearly a modern building (evidence from the metal roof structure) being used for very traditional activities regularly taken place at the temple.



Picture 4: Phi Ta Khon, the ghost features made of colourful costumes and masks normally made and worn by DS community members to participate in the procession during the Boon Luang Festival.

The DS community mostly refers to the central town of Dan Sai district in Loei province, where the main investigated activities take place. This research site was selected because the heritage being preserved in the community consisted of both tangible and intangible elements. The tangible aspect was initially concentrated on the Phi Ta Khon collections displayed at the Phi Ta Khon museum located inside of the Pone Chai temple. This is the main temple for religious events of the DS community. The intangible heritage was the spiritual events supported by members of the community throughout the year, specifically the so called Boon Luang ceremony and the celebration of Phi Ta Khon, which had been the main annual festival for more than 450 years.

In relation to the discussion of the Isan's region background already discussed in Chapter 2 regarding the strong relationship between the Lan Xang kingdom and Thai state, Dan Sai district was one of the peripheral towns in northern Isan that had been governed by rulers from Thai and Laos. Therefore, based on DS community folklore, the community members believed that rulers from both countries became friends and the symbol of friendship was represented through the Sri Song Rak stupa, which was established for keeping the belongings of the rulers from both countries. It has been respected by the members of the DS community from time immemorial. Moreover, there was a position called Chao Poh Guan believed to have been established 450 years ago for communicating with the spirits of these

rulers, as the community members believed that the rulers were still looking after the community's wellbeing. For this reason, Chao Poh Guan would be respected as if he were a ruler or the king who used to govern the community in the past. Therefore, Chao Poh Guan would have servants to receive the orders of the rulers' spirits and the person who represented the spirits of rulers would be highly respected by the community members, similarly to how they would have respected the rulers in the past. Picture 3 shows DS CPG as Chao Poh Guan leading his servants in the procession during the Boon Luang Festival.

In addition to the spiritual leadership typical of the DS community, the Phi Ta Khon ceremony was also a popular magnet for tourism. The Phi Ta Khon feature was associated with religious folklore about one past life of the Buddha called prince Vessantara Jataka. His greatest quality was being an almsgiver, and because of his generosity he gave away the most important white elephant. This upset his parents and all of the citizens, therefore he was expelled from the palace and had to live in hardship with his family in a forest. At the end of the story, he was forgiven and returned to the palace. His return to the palace was the most wonderful moment and was celebrated by everyone, including the spirits from the forests, who accompanied him and his family members to the palace. This was the origin of the Phi Ta Khon, which represented the joyful moment of the festival.

In addition to the Phi Ta Khon, the Boon Luang festival is a combination of a number of religious ceremonies; its name could be translated as the Grand Ceremonial Festival. It is too complicated to explain all of the elements of the Boon Luang festival within the scope of this project; nevertheless, the main ceremonies consist of three day-long activities. The first day is the invitation of 'Phra Uppakut' to protect the Boon Luang festival.¹⁷¹ Moreover, it is also the day of preparation and decoration of the Pone Chai temple for another ceremony – the

¹⁷¹ Phra Uppakut's story is related to the Buddha's legend and refers to a monk who used to protect the Lord Buddha from danger; therefore there is a ceremony before sunrise on the first day of the Boon Luang where a servant of DS CPG who is assigned to take responsibility for this particular event leads the crowd to the Mhun River, which is the main river of the community, to conduct the ceremony. It has long been a practice of this ceremony to use a hen-egg-sized stone to represent Phra Uppakut and the reason for this was explained by DS ABB that in the past it was not easy to find a statue to be a model for Phra Uppakut so the villagers simply used what was available in the local area such as a stone. Moreover, the trip to invite Phra Uppakut from the river is because it is believed that he lives underwater. The Boon Luang festival of the DS community is compared to the ceremony of pagodas being protected in the legend, which was an important ceremony as well as that of Boon Luang festival; therefore, there is an invitation of Phra Uppakut to protect the festival to ensure there will be no disturbance to harm the festival.

Boon Pa Wate, the religious ceremony associated with the story of prince Vessantara Jataka mentioned above.

The second day is the most attractive event to the festival participants, both community members and visitors, as it includes the procession and the PTK performers are allowed to perform on this day.¹⁷² On the same day, after the procession, there is another procession in the afternoon, which is also related to one incarnation of the Lord Buddha as a prince who was a notably charitable character. This is related to Boon Pa Wate as this procession marks the beginning of this particular event that is conducted at the Pone Chai temple. Therefore, the destination of the procession is the temple and this event is led by DS CPG. This event is also attractive to the visitors because after the procession that ends at the temple, the crowd parades around the temple hall and on each round coins are thrown by DS CPG, who is sitting on a litter; therefore, the participants are excited and full of joy from catching the money amongst themselves. The reason for throwing money is unclear but it could be associated with Tumm Boon which means giving away or benefiting others in Thai custom. Moreover, on this same day, there is another ritual called 'Boon Bung Fai', which could be translated as the rocket festival because the villagers fire rockets made of bamboo stems or water pipes to beg the rain god for an abundance of water in that year for a good rice harvest.

The last day of the Boon Luang festival is another full day of activities. It combines two main ceremonies together, starting with a long day of listening to thirteen episodes of sermon which tell the story of the great charitable prince, a previous life of the Lord Buddha as has been mentioned before, which also forms part of the Boon Pa Wate ceremony. Usually, the sermon begins before dawn and ends around dusk because of the considerable length of the story. The event is usually less attractive to the young than to elderly people. On the same day, in the late morning, people are also busy with another activity called 'Boon Sum Ha' which could be translated as the ritual of spiritual purifying as well as welcoming better luck in one's life.¹⁷³ This may be done while listening to the sermon.

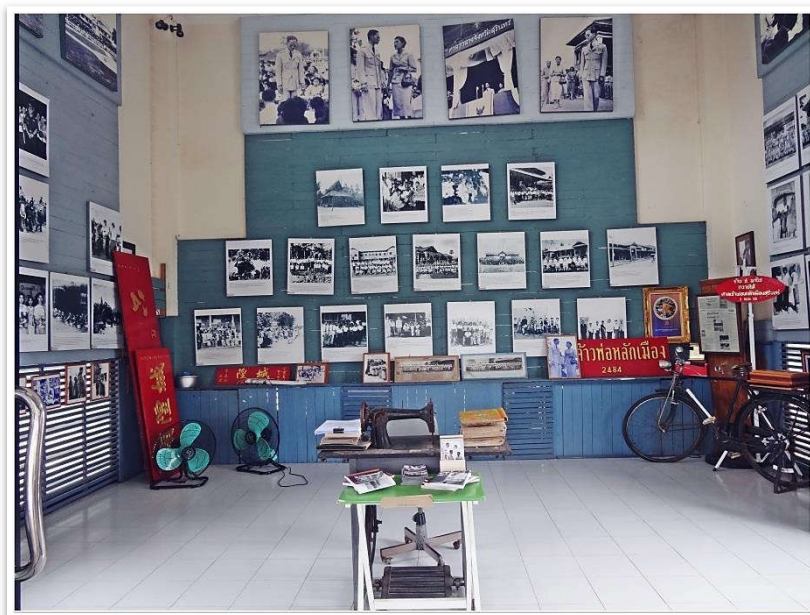
¹⁷² There is a rule for playing PTK as the traditional purpose of having PTK is related to religion. Therefore, they cannot perform as freely as they wish. Normally, on the day PTK performers have to start their play at DS CPG to worship the royal spirits before they can join the procession to end at the Pone Chai temple where most of the activities are happening on the day. The PTK performers then stay to entertain the festival visitors at the temple or go around the community.

¹⁷³ The processes involved making containers from natural materials found in the community such as banana leaf, banana stems and bamboo strips. Different kinds of items such as food and flowers are placed in them. All



Picture 5: Some illustrating processes from ‘Boon Sum Ha’ which include making natural-based containers to hold various items according to local beliefs (left), then praying by monks and setting fire to the items and containers (middle), and finally taking the remnant to throw into the river (right).

CASE STUDY 4: GAL



Picture 6: Interior space in GAL: a small room mainly used to display selected photographs based on themes of interest and relevance to the history of Surin province, such as the visit of the current King Rama IX and his queen. The themes were decided by the GAL management team.

GAL was an organisation identified as a gallery even though the work by the GAL staff was more closely akin to that of local historians. The organisation was mainly managed by just three staff, but the idea of establishing it grew from their previous work as a local historical

of these will be set on fire after completion of praying and the remnant would be carried over to the Mhun River and floated away, symbolising being free from any suffering or concerns in life.

society that had researched and produced a number of journals before their publication activities ceased. Thereafter, members of the society including GAL MON and GAL JIB wanted to continue their aims; therefore, they became the founders of the GAL and later hired GAL PHN to support administrative tasks, as well as being a regular researcher for the organisation. The organisation was formed in partnership with two other organisations: the RML University (which owns the building that hosts GAL) and Surin City Council (the main funding body for GAL). The collections of GAL are mainly photographs collected from communities in Surin province based on their historical interest, such as local craft skills i.e. textiles and silverwares. The GAL team would normally conduct oral history research by using the old photographs they receive into their collections as a tool for an oral interview with the people appearing in the photographs. They then write the local history and produce publications to disseminate their research results. They also provide outreach activities for the communities, such as mobile photograph exhibitions to schools or temples as well as providing training on local research for the RML University students.

GAL was selected as the case study because it seemed to have the activist characteristics associated with the community archives discussed in Western literature. The researcher was however also aware that GAL was different as it was not located within any of the communities that it was representing, but was acting on behalf of those communities via the historical research that it conducted. Nevertheless, the organisation originated as a voluntary endeavour and its work aimed to raise the voice of the marginalised groups within the larger community of Surin province.

4.2.2 DATA COLLECTION TECHNIQUES AND RESEARCH INSTRUMENTS

As previously mentioned, the techniques applied for data gathering included interviews and observation because they appeared to be the most appropriate techniques for this particular research. Other previous studies within the field of community archives have applied similar techniques including that discussed by Flinn, and Stevens, Flinn and Shepherd.¹⁷⁴ The research methodology applied in their studies was a grounded theory, their research method was case study and the techniques used were ethnography and interviews. The authors

¹⁷⁴ Flinn, A. 2011. *Archival activism: independent and community-led archives, radical public history and the heritage professions* (California: eScholarship, University of California); Stevens, M., A. Flinn, and E. Shepherd. 2010. 'New frameworks for community engagement in the archive sector: from handing over to handing on', *International Journal of Heritage Studies*, 16, pp.59-76

identified that ethnography had not previously been used by researchers in the field of community archives. They selected four case studies based in the London area and interviewed thirty additional participants from other organisations. They limited their selection of case studies to those already involved with mainstream archival institutions because one of their focuses was to examine relationships between community archives and publicly-funded organisations. It was not explicitly stated whether they had established other criteria for the selection of their case studies besides those already engaged with the public archives, although the selected cases' main interests were activist archives or institutions such as migrant, refugee or marginalised ethnic groups or transgender archives. This therefore omitted other types of community archives such as those having archives for pleasure or nostalgic or commemorative purposes. Although there was no explicit information in either article regarding the researchers' personal relationships with the studied organisations, it may be possible that their academic status and previous interest in the area of study may have established good relationships between the parties before the research took place.

In the case of this research in the community archives in the context of Thailand, some practical restrictions have prevented the application of full ethnographic methods, despite their potential benefit for deep investigation for a qualitative research project. It is necessary to point out that community archives existing in the Western world seem more clearly defined so that other researchers can limit their case study choices to the organisations that already have collections and those collections are most likely to be textual collections.

Although there have been attempts to include other types of archives, such as intangible heritage for collective memory, as discussed in Bastian, further studies are needed to investigate this. Up to the point that this research was written (November 2016) the processes by which intangible heritage is documented and included within a community archive have not been assessed within archival literature. The methods used by such archives tend to focus on oral history methods, whereas Bastian's article implied that the existence of continuity of practice implied archivalisation without formal documentation.

The initial literature research revealed that the nature of heritage institutions in Thailand seemed to present considerable differences from the current status of those 'community archive' institutions in the UK or elsewhere that appeared in the Western literature. This was partly because the term itself may not adequately represent the Thai communities' heritage

institutions (see further discussion in Appendix B, pages 342 – 357). Terminology investigation would therefore be part of the field work. However, for the purpose of the initial investigation, the researcher established a working definition of ‘community archives’ in her own terms in order to support her methodological framework on the concept of community archive. The working definition for this stage was:

Community archive is a collection of tangible heritage or an action of self-dedication to preserve the intangible heritage of a community, of which community engagement amongst its members in such processes is the most important feature.

As already mentioned, this research does not pretend to adopt a full ethnographic method, although it is case study based. Observation, which is the most important part of ethnography, played only a supplementary role to the interviews, and was used to evaluate the findings from the interviews, especially for the archival processes and the community context. Observation was supported by photography to record aspects of what was observed, see the further discussion in section 4.2.2.2.

Data collection techniques for this research, therefore, comprised of interviews, observation and visual data. Each technique will be described in the following paragraphs.

4.2.2.1 INTERVIEWING

4.2.2.1.1 METHOD OF INTERVIEWING

The interviews were designed as semi-structured interviews, to enable the novice researcher to have some control of the conversation. The interviews were guided by the prepared set of questions to ensure that the interview would cover the areas required by the research framework. However, the risk of using pre-prepared questions was that the researcher might control the direction of the interview and might not offer the interviewees sufficient opportunities to articulate their own perceptions. The researcher was aware of this issue and prepared both closed and open-ended questions; the latter allowed the interviewees to discuss their personal experience and perspectives on the topics more freely. The interviews also offered an opportunity for the interviewer to observe and note the participants’ interactions and body language, which could enhance later analysis. These records could supply other perspectives on the interview questions, including the context surrounding the individuals

and the environment they lived in, to enhance the researcher's understanding of the communities she was studying. In addition to the interviews, the researcher also undertook observations, which gave another opportunity to ask questions on topics that may not have been clearly answered from the initial formal interview or had not been answered by the participants. Moreover, at the end of each interview, the interviewees were given the opportunity to ask questions or express their opinions on topics that may not have been covered in the interview.

4.2.2.1.2 RECRUITMENT OF RESEARCH PARTICIPANTS

Key informants or community gatekeepers were identified during 'Phase One' in July 2013 when the researcher had opportunities to engage in informal interviews with them. The initial findings were analysed in association with the developed framework of the case selection. During 'Phase One', the researcher verbally asked for permission to conduct the research in the communities selected as case studies. Therefore, she had introduced herself to the key informants from the beginning. Exceptionally, in the case of DS community, the key informants were identified but the researcher did not meet them during 'Phase One' because she made her visit to the community during the Boon Luang Festival and it was not a convenient time to have interviews with any of the key informants. Therefore, she only met them after entering the field. These key informants were believed to be the most suitable people to provide information for this research due to their significant qualifications such as being an individual collector of a collection, curators or leaders of traditional events.

In addition to the key informants, more interviewees were recruited based on the recommendations of the key informants and community members. As was previously mentioned, the ethnographic approach was partly applied for this research. The researcher entered the research fields and quickly familiarised herself with the community environment by informally interviewing members of the communities as much as opportunity allowed. For example, the researcher chose to stay at a dormitory provided by a villager of the TM community (note that there had been an increasing amount of accommodation in the TM village and neighbouring villages as they were situated next to the local university and renting accommodation had recently become another income stream for the villagers) and she had learned about the community context from the dormitory owner. Her frequent references to TM SOS, the abbot of the TM forest temple, enabled the researcher to identify the abbot as

an important figure for the community; therefore, she included the abbot into the list of interviewees.

Data obtained from some interviewees were excluded from the analysis because the researcher considered that they were less relevant or duplicated the data received from other interviewees. For example, in the case of MC Cultural Home, data from two interviews were not included. They were with a monk from the temple from which the pottery was excavated and another was an aunt who regularly attended religious rituals at MC Cultural Home every holy day. The data received from these did not add significantly to that received from the interviews with MC SRS and MC NID; therefore, it was disregarded.

All in all there were 18 interviewees as listed below.

INTERVIEWEES FOR CASE STUDY 1: MC CULTURAL HOME

1) *MC SRS*, who was:

- key informant,
- male,
- 62 years old,
- a retired primary school teacher who opens his private collections to the public. He refurbished his ancestors' house and turned it into a small museum supported by his own funds. His museum also functions as a prayer space on Buddhist holy days, which take place four times a month. He is the prayer leader for that ceremony and at the same time he is also a spiritual medium, a power which is normally manifested after the prayers are over.

2) *MC NID*, who was:

- supplementary interviewee,
- female,
- approximately in her 40s,
- a teacher for the Non-formal Education (NFE) office of MC district. She has been associated with projects linked to the MC SRS collections, especially those that offer learning support to young people in the MC community using

the resources from the collections. She has also invited him to participate in the learning support projects led by the organisation.

INTERVIEWEES FOR CASE STUDY 2: TM COMMUNITY

1) *TM PKW*, who was:

- supplementary interviewee,
- male,
- approximately 64 years old,
- a monk who used to be an abbot of TM community's central temple or THA temple and who was initially identified as a key informant after 'Phase One'. However, he had temporarily withdrawn from the temple and the community's leading roles in heritage activities due to a scandal related to religion. Fortunately, with support from a TM villager, it was possible to have an interview with him during the fieldwork data collection.

2) *TM CLD*, who was:

- key informant,
- male,
- 61 years old,
- a retired teacher from the community's primary school, who played significant roles in leading as well as coordinating community activities.

3) *TM RTN*, who was:

- supplementary interviewee,
- female,
- 56 years old,
- a teacher at the community primary school.

4) *TM BHU*, who was:

- supplementary interviewee,
- male,

- 17 years old,
- a high school teenager, who grew up with TM PKW and had participated in the community's heritage activities through which he gained recognition amongst his fellow community members for his expertise in manuscript language literacy.

5) *TM SOS*, who was:

- supplementary interviewee,
- male,
- approximately 62 years old,
- an abbot of the community's forest temple. Selecting him as an interviewee occurred during the data collection as his name was frequently referred to by a number of community members, especially as a main leader for a particular well-known annual festival which generally had an impact on the TM community as a whole.

INTERVIEWEES FOR CASE STUDY 3: DS COMMUNITY

1) *DS CPG*, who was:

- key informant,
- male,
- 65 years old,
- spiritual leader of the community.

2) *DS ABB*, who was:

- supplementary interviewee,
- male,
- approximately 60 years old,
- abbot of Pone Chai temple, the community's main temple.

3) *DS GFT*, who was:

- supplementary interviewee,

- female,
- 31 years old,
- a caretaker of the PTK Museum and a teacher for Non-formal Education (NFE) office of DS district.

4) *DS GIN*, who was:

- supplementary interviewee,
- male,
- approximately 53 years old,
- the man responsible for making a pair of main giant PTK puppets for the procession every year.

5) *DS SML*, who was:

- supplementary interviewee,
- male,
- approximately 45 years old,
- head of the PTK mask and costume makers, who regularly participated in the community festival procession every year.

6) *DS TAN*, who was:

- supplementary interviewee,
- female,
- approximately 35 years old,
- a documentary filmmaker of a private company hired by the Ministry of Culture to produce relevant cultural films for the Ministry, including the PTK festival.

INTERVIEWEES FOR CASE STUDY 4: GAL

1) *GAL MON*, who was:

- key informant,
- female,

- 34 years old,
- a co-founder and a general manager of GAL.

2) ***GAL NBA***, who was:

- supplementary interviewee,
- male,
- approximately 28 years old,
- a monk of the NBA temple who is also an individual collector and particularly interested in local history of the SR town, which is also his hometown. He used to participate in the outreach activity of GAL's project for stories of temple communities.

3) ***GAL NUI***, who was:

- supplementary interviewee,
- male,
- approximately 63 years old,
- an ex-committee member of SR provincial cultural association. He was included in the list of interviewees because he was recommended by GAL PHN, a member of staff of GAL, during a mobile exhibition to present a photograph collection from GAL at a hotel in SR city. He had many years' acquaintance with the organisation since he had been working in the SR province for a long period of time.

4) ***GAL SOM***, who was:

- supplementary interviewee,
- male,
- 73 years old,
- a retired government officer, who became a full-time farmer/gardener after retirement. He knew GAL because he had to pass the organisation regularly to his farm and he eventually decided to stop for a visit to the collections held by GAL.

5) *GAL DSW*, who was:

- supplementary interviewee,
- female,
- approximately 44 years old,
- a host of independent home-stay accommodation in SR city. She was lent some photographs from GAL collections for decoration at her accommodation.

4.2.2.1.3 INTERVIEWING TIME

The initial plan was that interviews should last between 30 minutes and 1 hour; nevertheless, the actual time spent on each interview could be shorter or longer depending on different circumstances. For example, the interview may be combined with the observation of the collections or events that could take longer than planned. This was because some questions, especially those involving archival activities such as appraisal, description and preservation, might be addressed during the observation with the permission of the communities or organisations. Tape recording as well as photographs were used to record the sound and processes of working and ongoing events to support the data analysis process.

4.2.2.1.4 DATA RECORDING

Interview data was recorded by a dictaphone (digital voice recorder) and by note taking. Photographic recording was used to document working processes and ongoing events. Permission for recording the sound and photographs was always obtained before these took place, except in the case of public events such as religious processions. The consent form was always presented to the key informants before conducting the interviews. Moreover, the researcher also prepared a postcard-sized paper that contained brief information about the research, as well as contact information to hand out to other interviewees who were recruited based on the recommendation of the key informants, for a quick introduction to her project and herself.

4.2.2.2 OBSERVATION

The observation technique was briefly mentioned in section 2 Qualitative Methodology. The focus of this section will be a more detailed explanation of the observation technique applied for each community.

As mentioned earlier, an ethnographic approach was the preferred methodology applied in the most significant previous study in order to allow complete participation in the activities of their case studies. Studies beyond the field of community archives such as in cultural or heritage-related disciplines have also used ethnographic observation since researchers believe that this approach will allow them to immerse themselves within the studied groups or communities that are being investigated. Furthermore, ethnographic research is claimed to be the best means to gain a ‘thick’ description of the content and context of the case studies, as suggested by the study about Balinese cock fighting by Clifford Geertz.¹⁷⁵ Normally, observation in ethnographic research is used together with other techniques, the most common being interviewing. In -depth interviews are a popular method for researchers conducting ethnographic research.

Even though ethnography was considered to be an ideal approach for this particular study, due to practical issues including the location of the researcher in the UK for study purposes, it was not possible to conduct this study completely through traditional ethnographic research. Nonetheless, the researcher attempted to apply observation techniques to supplement the data collected from the semi-structured interviews. Her role of observation was designed be a combination of ‘the observer as participant’ and ‘the completed observer’ approaches.¹⁷⁶ The ‘observer as participant’ means that the researcher spends a certain time in a group or community and may participate in some events or activities by the group or community; however, he/she never becomes a full-time participant. A ‘complete observer’ means that the role of the researcher is only as an outsider, and he/she will not take any formal role in the studied groups, but only observes them.

The initial plan was to spend approximately 3 weeks at each research site; however, the time spent in practice was slightly different than the plan due to the specific circumstances of each case. For example, it took only four days to interview the individual collector at the MC Cultural Home and to participate in an event held at his site because the researcher sensed the high privacy of the site after the interview with the individual collector due to the relationship

¹⁷⁵ Geertz, C. 1972. 'Deep Play: Notes on the Balinese Cockfight', *Daedalus*, 101, pp.1-37

¹⁷⁶ Hammersley, M. and P. Atkinson. 1995. *Ethnography: principles in practice* (London: Routledge), p.104 as cited in David, M., and C.D. Sutton. 2004. *Social research: the basics* (London: SAGE), p.108. The original concept was developed by Gold, R.L. 1958. 'Roles in sociological fieldwork', *Social Forces*, 36, pp.217-223, whose ideas was elaborated by Junker, B. 1960. *Fieldwork* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press)

of the site with religious purposes. Moreover, the viewing of the collections had already been completed during 'Phase One' and the researcher was permitted by the individual collector to use any information necessary for the analysis from the data acquired from both visits. Therefore, the field trips to the other three sites could be longer depending on the data available at each site. For example, the GAL case took nine days in total since there were not many activities being undertaken by the organisation. Moreover, the visit was during the summer vacation of the university which hosted the organisation; therefore, the number of visitors, who were sometimes university students, appeared to be less than during regular term time. Therefore, the GAL staff had to help the researcher to find the interviewees by making appointments with some visitors living within the community who knew or used to visit the gallery before. As for the TM and DS communities, the researcher spent more time there than with the aforementioned cases since there were more ongoing activities within the communities, and the context of both communities was more complicated than MC Cultural Home and GAL. The time spent at the TM and DS communities was approximately fifteen days in each case.

4.2.2.3 PHOTOGRAPHIC RECORDING

Using photographs as a means of data collection was another technique applied in this study. An advantage of photographs is that they offer direct referents and can show social relationships.¹⁷⁷ This technique was initially selected because the researcher wanted to use photographs as an extra tool for observation, alongside the data obtained from the semi-structured interviews, especially in relation to the ownership and management of community heritage, and activities and participation. The purpose of photographic recording during the community engagement in heritage activities was to examine the relationships amongst the members of the groups.

Regarding the university requirement for the anonymity of research participants, the researcher found it challenging to ensure anonymity in the photographs; therefore, she included the option for the participants to accept or refuse the taking of photographs in the consent form (see Appendix F for the consent forms, pages 371 – 376). However, for the public events, this practice would be impossible. Moreover, it was observed that community members generally agreed to have their photographs taken as it was believed that they had

¹⁷⁷ Baker, T.L. 1999. *Doing social research* (London: McGraw-Hill), p.263

pride in their activities and would like to communicate that via media including photographs. This was the case with the DS community, where community members were accustomed to tourism promotion.

Photographic recording was not only selected to interpret the relationships of community members; it was also simply used for presenting the community heritage for the international readers to better understand the context of Thai culture.

4.3 PROCEDURES FOR DATA PROCESSING AND ANALYSIS

The languages used for interviewing included standard Thai and Isan dialects; the interview data was downloaded from the dictaphone and transcribed from these languages into English. It should be noted that the process of transcribing the interview data was the most time-consuming element of this research project. Although the initial plan was to transcribe the interview data and if necessary translate it into standard Thai first, then to translate it into English, and finally to edit it, the actual practice of doing so was very time consuming, especially since the interviews lasted approximately twenty hours for all the participants. The revised plan for transcription was that the researcher created annotations rather than full transcriptions in order to focus on the main points of the interviews that were relevant to the semi-structured interview questions. However, the researcher found that the transcription in note form did not provide enough data for the analysis; therefore, she shifted to a third approach in which she transcribed the interviews in standard Thai but did not translate them into English. She found that this method helped her to understand the interview content better. During this time, NVivo software was used to support the data analysis in order to give structure to the mass of data; therefore, the software application became the means for the fourth phase. All of the data, including the interview records, Thai interview transcript and the annotated interviews, were uploaded to the software and the rest of the analysis was conducted using the software.

Using the software allowed the researcher to familiarise herself with the data by coding it according to themes emerging from the content. NVivo allows codes to be structured hierarchically by nodes. Moreover, the software also proved convenient for performing word frequency analysis, text searching and creating a tree map to explore the nodes by comparing the number of items coded or the coding referenced. All of these functions had helped the researcher to narrow down the analysis into three main themes which emerged across all case

studies. Those themes were motivation, provenance and sustainability, and each became a separate chapter of this thesis.

The observational data was recorded in the form of field notes and it was used to support the interview data. Although different researchers may have different styles of writing field notes, there are general guidelines for writing field notes such as mental notes and jotted notes for the pre-initial writing, as suggested by Emerson. Researchers have generally considered these to be good guidelines to keep in mind while writing the field notes, for example using sketches to describe the scenes, episodes to recount action and moving through time, stance to underlie characters, and changing points of view between the 1st and 3rd person.¹⁷⁸ Being aware of the advice from the literature, the researcher attempted to keep field notes as best she could to record the observations from the field. However, there may be some lack of information due to the tight schedules that did not always allow her time to take notes (see Appendix G for examples of field notes, pages 377 - 381).

Finally, all of the analysed data from the interview transcripts, observational field notes and photographic records were examined in relation to the findings from studies of Western community archives in order to establish commonalities and differences.

4.4 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The methodology adopted has a number of limitations, of which the researcher was aware. First, the case study approach cannot be used to generalise the findings more widely. The aim of the study was to gain a detailed picture of the individual studies. This might involve the identification of possible points of similarity and difference, but cannot be used to draw overall conclusions about community archives, either more generally or in Thailand.

Second, data was only acquired from key informants along with few participants recruited through the snowballing technique from recommendations by the key informants. This was due to the restricted timeframe of the field research, but means that issues of impact on the community could only be addressed from the perspective of these key informants and from the data gathered through observation, which was inevitably limited by time restrictions.

¹⁷⁸ Emerson, R.M., R.I. Fretz, and L.L. Shaw. 2007. *'Participant observation and fieldnotes'*, in Atkinson, P., A. Coffey, S. Delamont, J. Lofland, and L. Lofland (eds.) *Handbook of ethnography* (London: SAGE), pp.352-368

Additionally, in the cases of MC Cultural Home and GAL in particular, the researcher was not in a position to investigate the communities which those organisations claimed to represent. However, these two cases were selected for their specific characteristics in order to gain a fuller picture of the full range of self-documentation of Thai communities, including the perspectives of an individual collector and a group of local activist historians.

Third, it should be noted that the researcher was aware of her overlapping role as both an insider and outsider to the communities she was planning to study. Since she was a native to the Northeast (Isan) region, where the case studies were located, she was not a complete outsider to her research subjects because of the shared Isan culture. However, at the same time, she could not be claimed as a complete insider of those communities because they were all located in different provinces and had their own unique backgrounds. This argument could be applied with the MC Cultural Home, which was one of the case studies situated in the researcher's hometown. The researcher could see the gap between herself and the people who lived in her community because of her educational background and overseas experience, as she had gained most education from schools in the city centre and abroad from childhood to adulthood and rarely had the opportunity to engage with community activities.

Fourth, the researcher is aware of the process of 'member checking' which is recommended to take place after the data collection has been completed so that the participants will have a chance to look at their responses and comment on or choose to prevent some information from being used.¹⁷⁹ Some researchers may have found this process valuable, but for this research project, the chance to have the participants check the information seemed unlikely because of time constraints and the distance between Thailand and the UK. However, the researcher did offer the participants the opportunity to review the data if they felt the need to see it. All of the participants understood the situation and agreed that the study could carry on without the need for checking. Nevertheless, there was one specific participant, DS CPG, who appeared to be more careful in communication about his community, in that he asked the researcher to be honest regarding the data received and not to misrepresent the meanings he conveyed. The researcher appreciated his trust and confirmed that she would adhere to ethical principles in analysing and communicating the information.

¹⁷⁹ Pickard, A.J. 2013. *Research methods in information* (Chicago: Neal-Schuman), p.107

Furthermore, this study did not aim to investigate the opinion of archivists working in mainstream or conventional archives in Thailand; therefore, the researcher was aware of the lack of information from their perspectives to compare with the findings gleaned from the communities.

4.5 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

The researcher had approval from the University's ethics committee to conduct the fieldwork without serious concerns about ethical issues. However, there was a risk that the researcher had to take into consideration regarding the anonymity of persons, communities and organisations because it would be difficult to guarantee their anonymity due to the important roles they played in these unique places. Therefore, the researcher included the option for the participants to indicate whether or not they required their information to be anonymous. If they said that they would like to be disguised, the researcher did her best to make the relevant information confidential.

To summarise this chapter, the research methodology has been described, including the research design, qualitative methodology (sampling, brief introduction of each case study, interviewing, methods of interviewing, recruitment of research participants, list of the interviewees, interviewing time, data recording, observation, and photographic recording). The procedures for data processing and analysis, the limitations of the study, and ethical considerations have also been discussed. The next three chapters, Motivation, Provenance, and Sustainability will discuss the research findings according to the mentioned themes.

CHAPTER 5

MOTIVATION

5.1 INTRODUCTION

It seemed that 'Motivation' needed to be the first aspect to be examined from the case study communities because it is the driving force behind the activities in which they engage.

Learning about the motivations for their activities would help to understand the reasons that support their decision, the value of the activities, and the context of that community, which has potential influence on their action.

The founders of community archives normally have their own agenda for the purposes they want to achieve, which is the original motivation for the organisation's existence. This is also the case in Thailand, where the communities, based on findings from this research's case studies, have their own goals. In order to demonstrate these differences or similarities amongst the case studies, this chapter will provide the narrative based on the studied communities and will summarise the motivations, which are analysed from each case study at the end of the chapter.

The initial framework used to guide data collection was developed from the first frameworks used to select the case studies and was intended to gather data on a number of different aspects, including motivations. Although the areas of motivation that are important for community archives had already been discussed in Chapter 3, The Community Archives Movement, it may be worth repeating them for the purpose of this chapter.

Flinn indicated that motivations for community archives could be seen as historical focus, activist driver, and sharing of common interest, history of place or occupation.¹⁸⁰ Gilliland identified that a variety of reasons could motivate communities to start community-based heritage activities, such as:

- 1) wanting to have a voice;
- 2) wanting to develop a community identity from inward and outward the community, such as communication, sharing, agenda organising, and networking;

¹⁸⁰ Flinn, A. 2008. 'Archives and their communities: serving the people', *Comma*, 2008, p.162

- 3) reacting to issues of social injustice such as seen in the collections of marginalised groups;
- 4) wanting to keep records of evidence for the purpose of conflict resolution or post-conflict recovery;
- 5) wanting to have a place to keep records of the historical events of their community; and
- 6) wanting to have recordkeeping for their community, e.g. tracking rights and responsibilities and documenting land and property ownership.¹⁸¹

5.2 METHODOLOGY

Motivation is both individual and communal. In terms of data collection, individual motivation was most readily investigated from the interview, with the following questions aiming to identify the motivation of those interviewed:

Could you tell me, in your own words, about the story of this collection/event?

- Why was the collection established at first?/How did the event begin?
- Who would benefit from this collection?
- Why is it important to have this collection/event?

‘Phase One’ aimed to identify the key figures in each community in terms of documentation and heritage preservation activities. Where possible, other stakeholders who might influence these activities were also interviewed. This chapter aims to identify and explore the main motivations of significant stakeholders based on encoding of their interviews as described in Chapter 4, Methodology. After encoding, the codes were analysed in order to identify which might relate to motivation. These comprised: motivation or inspiration, establishment background, importance of community activities, background of the interviewees, reasons for consistency of activity engagement, the interviewees’ role in his/her community, and perception about community heritage. The interview passages so encoded form the basis of this chapter.

¹⁸¹ Gilliland, A.J. [2012]. *Voice, Identity, Activism (VIA): a community-centric framework for approaching archives and recordkeeping*

Any community is made up of many individuals and it was impossible to interview all community members. The motivations of the community as a whole were explored through observation of their participation in communal events, whilst recognising that outward action may be poor evidence for inner motivation. Nevertheless, levels of participation can be seen as indicators of community buy-in to the leaders' objectives.

It should also be noted that heritage encompasses both tangible and intangible elements and the motivations for preserving each could potentially be different, although the analysis below suggests that the two are so interwoven that separation is unhelpful. Nevertheless, individual motivations are likely to have an influence on the tangible heritage, whilst community motivation appears to be more beneficial to the intangible aspects. These different kinds of motivation in relation to both heritage domains are further described in this chapter.

CASE STUDY 1: INDIVIDUAL COLLECTOR AND OWNER OF MC CULTURAL HOME

5.3 INTERVIEWEES

MC SRS, male, an individual collector and the owner of MC Cultural Home

MC NID, female, a teacher in the Non-formal Education (NFE) office at MC district branch

(See more details about them as well as other interviewees from each case study in the Methodology chapter, pages 84 – 89.)

5.4 MOTIVATIONS IDENTIFIED FROM THE INTERVIEWS

5.4.1 Sense of marginalisation

5.4.2 Passion for antiquity

5.4.3 Sense of responsibility for the community

5.4.4 Awareness of loss in local values and conservation on behalf of community members

5.4.5 Providing community learning space

5.4.6 Personal and local belief

5.4.7 Reviving textile skills

5.4.1 SENSE OF MARGINALISATION

Analysis of the interview with MC SRS reveals that having received his education from outside the community, especially from more advanced areas, may have influenced his outlook and had a significant impact on his decision making regarding his future.

Approximately 40-50 years ago, MC SRS went to Bangkok to study for a university degree.

It should be understood that, during that period of time, Thailand began to develop a fundamental infrastructure mainly close to urban and industrialised areas, leaving a big development gap between rural and metropolitan areas. Therefore, when seeking employment and educational opportunities, people from rural areas had to go to metropolitan areas, where these opportunities were mainly clustered.¹⁸²

¹⁸² Brown, D. 1994. 'Internal colonialism and ethnic rebellion in Thailand', in Brown, D. (ed.) *The state and ethnic politics in Southeast Asia* (London: Routledge), p.166; Mills, M.B. 2012. 'Thai Mobilities and Cultural Citizenship', *Critical Asian Studies*, 44, pp.85-112

MC SRS had experienced the advancement of his career and the convenience of life in Bangkok during his time in the capital city and started to realise the lack of facilities in his hometown, MC:

Our town is in a rural area and there is unavailability of learning space. When I went to study in Bangkok, people usually wanted to know where I am from and they normally did not know the place when I told them the name of my hometown. I started to feel upset about it.

My friends in Bangkok asked why I would not rather stay there instead of returning home to face the drought conditions, and I told them that I missed my hometown and I intended to return there because if I did not start doing, this who else would do it?

(MC SRS)

These quotations reveal a sense of differentiation, even marginalisation, which became a turning point for him to return to work around his hometown, even though he could have chosen to stay in Bangkok or move somewhere else.

5.4.2 PASSION FOR ANTIQUITY

In addition to his sense of MC town's inadequacy in comparison with the more developed region, there was also a driver from his own personal interest in antique items and traditional domains that he would like to preserve for younger generations. He felt that it was his responsibility to take action before their history, which told the story and represented the identity of the MC community and its people, was forgotten through time, which would be the case if no heritage preservation initiatives were taken.

I went to see my friends and found an old temple hall of Ban Bua village temple, so I took several photographs of it as well as some shots taken during the day of my friend's profession as a monk. ...I personally like to collect the antiques as well; therefore, when I saw those old items, which sometimes were abandoned or no longer in use around their house, I would ask the villagers [if I could] have them if they were happy to give away the items.

(MC SRS)

He gradually built up a collection starting from his own family possessions and later acquiring items from the villages he had visited during his school trips. These villages were in the MC district areas, which he covered for work, and he discovered that some old-fashioned tools had been abandoned by the villagers, who no longer used them in their daily lives since their way of living had changed and these tools were no longer useful. Therefore, he started to ask for permission from the villagers to take such items and cumulatively collected them and built up his collections on an *ad hoc* basis. The above quotation shows that his acquisitions were driven by his motivation to preserve traditional items in order to represent traditional ways of life for the next generation.

In addition to his awareness of heritage value perceived from the items given by members of communities he had visited, the analysis also showed that a fondness for folklore had a significant influence on his interest in heritage preservation. The below quotation shows the reason for his inspiration to collect the betel receptacles because of his fascination with an Isan folktale.

Those items reminded me of Isan literature entitled 'Khu Lu Nang Ua', especially for the flirtatious scene between the main actor and actress, and there was description about a receptacle for betel; therefore, I was inspired to know what the receptacle for betel actually looks like and I started to collect them since then, as I was afraid that the younger generations may not know what they are.

(MC SRS)

As will be discussed below, this quotation also demonstrates his sense of personal responsibility for passing on knowledge to the younger generation.

5.4.3 SENSE OF RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE COMMUNITY

Analysis of the interview with MC SRS also reveals that his family background played a significant role in his perception of personal responsibility for heritage preservation and influenced him to take the leading role for this particular activity due to his genealogical linkage with the first founder of the town.

Moreover, I had always wanted to make it happen and it was a result from my personal interest in [history] research and perceptions of my ancestors. The ancestors are related to the founder of this town and they were getting old; therefore, I had to be quick in the collecting processes before these materials disappear through time and we may not have any sources for learning in the future.

(MC SRS)

Due to this association with the town's founder, it seems that MC SRS had evolved a civic responsibility mind-set and characteristics. This perception about preservation because of his duty as being part of the town founder's lineage had resulted in his feeling a responsibility to do so on behalf of his community members, as may be demonstrated from the following quotation:

On behalf of local people, I wanted to build this to be a learning centre for other locals to be proud of themselves and love their hometown. If I didn't begin this first, all these things might be disappearing.

(MC SRS)

This quotation also demonstrates a sense of urgency, perhaps deriving from his experience of modernity in Bangkok and recognition that old traditions could quickly disappear, which will now be discussed in more detail.

5.4.4 AWARENESS OF LOSS IN LOCAL VALUES AND CONSERVATION ON BEHALF OF COMMUNITY MEMBERS

In addition to the relevant aforementioned motivations discovered from the data analysis, it was also found that the space for maintaining MC SRS's collections, which was named 'Kum Wattanatham' in Thai and is called MC Cultural Home throughout this thesis, appears to have been carefully chosen and thus can be identified as being of significant value in terms of

cultural preservation aspects in relation to his awareness of its loss through time, as shown in the following quotation.

My personal definition of Cultural Home is that it should be a house containing collections of the ancestors to remind the young generations to love their hometown.
(MC SRS)

He further explained the reasons for choosing these specific terms to describe his repository, which could imply his strong desire to establish the place yet also reveal how his humble personality affected his decision making.

I preferred the word 'wattanatham', which is translated [in the] English language as 'culture', because I wanted to name the place Cultural Centre of MC, which means the centre for learning; however, after I reconsidered about it, I thought it may be something too big for what I have here. ...The word 'Kum' [Cultural Home is translated as Kum Wattanatham] means a group of not many houses located in close [proximity], which I think is not too big. It is a good size to describe [my collections].
(MC SRS)

According to the above quotation, MC SRS favoured the term ‘wattanatham’, which refers to ‘culture’; however, his statement implies that the term ‘centre’ is problematic as he pointed out that it was initially chosen after ‘wattanatham’ or ‘culture’ to refer to a ‘place’ containing his collections. However, he felt that the term seemed to over-represent his collections, which he perceived as ‘do-it-yourself’ collections, and which thus were entirely independent from any official domain. He therefore thought that other terms would be better to replace ‘centre’, as he found it was likely to refer to a more official or mainstream organisation as well as implying larger-scale collections than he actually owned. Furthermore, the term ‘Kum’, which comes from the Isan dialect and has a meaning referring to a geographical location covering several houses or a small community surrounding his house, was chosen over the term ‘centre’. The term ‘Kum’ could also be interpreted as a feeling of a close-knitted community on a smaller scale than the term ‘centre’, which gives a more formal impression. The terminology used for his collection nevertheless demonstrates his desire that it should have a community status beyond being his private collection.

5.4.5 PROVIDING A COMMUNITY LEARNING SPACE

It is also notable that MC SRS's thought of creating the MC Cultural Home was partly associated with the idea of providing educational resources, because it was often referred to as a 'learning centre' during the interviews. The term 'learning centre' appears to be a convenient term for a local or community-based space where collections of traditional items, such as old-fashioned equipment and tools, are kept or displayed mainly for educational purposes, which could be similar to a volunteer-run local museum, where potential learning activities could take place in the space depending on available resources. As for the case of MC SRS, the concept of the Cultural Home as a 'learning centre' may be connected with his long career as a teacher, which influenced his learning centre initiative, and the priority given to the benefits of children's education as well as heritage safeguarding for the younger generations in particular. The following quotation shows his inspiration in creating a space for learning, which was driven from the experience he gained from outside his own community, especially the comparisons he was able to make with metropolitan areas such as Bangkok where he had lived while pursuing higher education far from home.

Moreover, I wanted to build a learning resource for the community the same as examples from developed countries, where local museums are normally found in the local areas.

...There is some advantage from being on television programmes. I had received many calls from people, who had watched the programmes, especially those who live in MC district. On the programmes, I emphasised the aim in establishing the Cultural Home was to encourage the MC younger generations to love their hometown. After having seen the programmes, others may come to visit the place to learn about the history of the town. I want our children to know and be part of the town's protection and to continue what I have already established for them. I hope to teach them to be proud of their hometown.

(MC SRS)

5.4.6 PERSONAL AND LOCAL BELIEF

As well as his intention to safeguard local heritage and share that experience with the locals and general public, the space hosting his collections is also used to facilitate religious

functions linked with ancestral practices from the past. These practices encompass supernatural belief as well as local folklore.

The MC Cultural Home was built from a combination of three buildings inherited from his parents, modified in such a way that two buildings from the old houses were linked by a rice silo, which was placed in the middle. There is a particular belief regarding the position of the silo which was pointed out by MC SRS as it was believed to be a sacred space, which – as his father stated – should not be used as a living space. Having respected his father's words, he thus had decided to use the renovated silo as a prayer room instead.

The three buildings were merged to become the MC Cultural Home. The set of buildings was representative of a traditional Isan house style in the past and that was the main reason why MC SRS did not change any of the buildings' main characteristics. Based on the researcher's observation, the most utilised space in the whole building seemed to be the prayer room because it would be used for the Buddhist days of observance, which normally take place once a week in a lunar month. On the second visit after 'Phase One' for the data collection, I learned that the praying was not only to worship the Buddhist Three Gems, which is normally practised by Thai Buddhists, but the event also included spirit worship that involved communication with spirits in which MC SRS acted as the spiritual medium himself.

Although he was aware that this spiritual communion ceremony was an individual belief and he did not want to expose the idea to everyone, the event was not forbidden to anyone who might be interested in participating; therefore, I was allowed to attend for observation that evening. Observation of the event suggests his practices were associated with personal and local beliefs inherited from his ancestors; and that such beliefs supported the agricultural livelihood inherited from the past, as will be explained.

Mentioned during the interview with MC SRS was a particular belief that was related to Naga, a giant snake appearing in Isan folklores combined with Thai Buddhist myths, folklores and Buddhist legends, whose habitat is believed to be underwater and which has power to control the rainfall. This belief is primarily associated with the agricultural livelihood of local communities in the past when the majority of people were farmers and relied on rainwater for their agriculture. The purpose of worshipping the Nagas with a floating basket is to show them great gratitude and to request their protection for an abundant

harvest. MC SRS explained that this rite had disappeared for some time until he was able to communicate with the ancestral spirits and they requested him to bring the practice back to the community. Since then, MC SRS has been making the floating basket on a specific day to follow this belief of the ancestors. People from the MC community usually joined him for this event more than for the regular prayer services.

This ceremony [Naga sacrifice] was practised by my ancestors before but it was stopped at some point; therefore, I was asked to restore the ceremony and continue it. ... I don't know, if you want to know more about it you should come on the Buddhist holy days to participate in the praying ceremony. I can't tell you about this thing because something is beyond human perception, so I don't know what that is. However, the sheriff or head of NFE had participated in the ceremony in the past. [The conversation was regarding who had asked him to restore the Naga sacrifice.]
(MC SRS)

The above quotation suggests his reluctance to tell further stories of the Naga myth or explain any links with his role as a spiritual medium. This motivation is harder to evaluate because it was entirely related to personal belief. Nevertheless, analysis from observation from participation in the praying event suggests that the spiritual worshipping activities that he led had purposes relating to the mental wellbeing of the participants because the spirits with which he claimed to be in communion were the 'good spirits', such as the town founders and the Naga. Those people who joined him for regular praying also sought after mental remedy via gaining advice from the spirits for which they shared respect with MS SRS. There was not enough evidence to conclude what was the main driver for MC SRS's motivation to be involved in spiritual rites, besides personal belief. Nevertheless, interpretation from the analysed data is unlikely to indicate his desire to acquire social and cultural capital even though he himself had been recognised as an expert in Isan history and culture; for instance, he had been part of the town's cultural committee for years and had been engaging in cultural promotion and preservation of the town as well at both provincial and national levels.

I was sometimes invited [by related heritage organisations] to participate in their events, such as two weeks ago the National Museum invited me to visit a museum in Pathum Thani province, outskirts of Bangkok. ... Last month, I was invited to speak on a topic related to Thai-Laos languages and culture.

(MC SRS)

However, he never requested funding from the government, for example, to improve his collections.

I think it is shameful to ask for public funding to support my personal collections. It is rather used for other matters. Moreover, what I'm doing is abstraction and it is difficult for them to assess the value of it [if I ask for public funds]. My happiness is simply gained from visitors who admire what I do.

(MC SRS)

From the above quotation, the statement ‘*My happiness is simply gained from visitors who admire what I do*’ probably says it all for his motivation to create the MC Cultural Home: that he simply wished to do good deeds for his community, especially to provide education or consultancy on cultural aspects in which he had years of experience and plenty of skills. He seemed to be proud of his contribution rather than craving for honours or recognition.

5.4.7 REVIVING TEXTILE SKILLS

The analysis of the fieldwork data also identified another area of motivation that influenced MC SRS to set up heritage initiatives in his community, which concerns his attempt to preserve knowledge and skills related to the production of traditional silk fabric. Since the interview data did not provide sufficient information regarding the exact processes involved in fabric production, it could be understood that MC SRS was involved in all the relevant processes from beginning to the end.

His interest in Isan silk textiles was clearly presented via his collections at MC Cultural Home and the following statement tells his background of interest in the textiles.

Having told you about the history of the town, I'm moving on to the story of my silk fabric collection. I was initially interested in this because I was invited onto a committee for an Isan fabric competition. I had learned about the uniqueness of our silk fabric, which is manually produced by the villagers and natural coloured applied, which is different from methods mostly used by our neighbour district, CB, where the producers applied chemical colours to the fabric. I also learned that our local fabric

production had been preserved from the past when our ancestors migrated from Laos and used this route to pass to other towns in the region. This route is also known as the Isan silk road and the uniqueness of the produced silk fabric along this route is that villagers still apply natural colours to the fabric. Once I learned about the history of the silk fabric in our town, I started to develop the natural-coloured silk fabric techniques together with a group of NY community's fabric producers [NY community is a village located within MC district – researcher's note].

(MC SRS)

An analysis of the above statement shows that MC SRS became interested in the silk textiles after he had learned more about the local production of silk textiles in a wider context than he had perceived in the past. He learned to distinguish the differences in those produced by MC community from the textiles made in another neighbourhood, such that he wanted to promote the uniqueness of his hometown silk. He therefore took further steps to research them, especially in the area of colour development, which he recognised as the strength of his hometown textiles and so he wanted to promote it for the economic benefits of the community members.

Although attending a textiles event was said to be the beginning of his interest in the field, interview results show his passion for silk textiles could go back as far as his childhood. By connecting the experience of his adulthood with the memory he had of his grandmother from spending a lot of time with her at a young age, he had enhanced his understanding of the local silk-producing legacy.

I noticed from my grandmother that she always liked to wear the same silk skirt repetitively for a long time and I kept wondering why she liked to wear the same skirt all the time. She told me that the reason for wearing the same skirt repetitively was because she felt comfortable as the fabric was soft. I made my own assumption, according to information received from her, that the reason for fabric softening must come from the reaction between the mud staining grandmother's skirt when she wore it to work in the rice fields, in which the mud may contain an iron substance and the protein from the silk fabric making the fabric soft, as they are harmoniously reacting from both natural sources, making the fabric soft and preserving the original colour.

(MC SRS)

Having not only discovered the traditional strategy to soften the silk fabric, MCS SRS was also an expert on the silk textile designs, including new ones developed from traditional designs. He also displayed these designs, which appeared on the silk textiles produced by the community, who consulted him about their weaving processes.

These clothes on display in this room [silk fabric display on dummies in another room] are not original but I developed the new design and passed it to the villagers to produce based on the given design.

(MC SRS)

The above examples regarding textile development, with which MC SRS had been engaging, demonstrate his motivation to preserve the silk textile production within the MC community. However, his desire was not only limited to the act of collecting those textiles from the community due to the fear of skill loss through time. His motivation also expanded to include conducting research on textile development, especially in association with traditional or inherited understanding of designs and colours with more contemporary values added to the textiles. This development of local silk fabric with which he had been engaging for years shows the dynamism of MC heritage in terms of the connection of tangible heritage (the textiles) with intangible heritage (production procedures) in order to revive local heritage such as the silk textiles, which are a fundamental part of the MC community's identity.

To summarise, the motivations that drove MC SRS's to engage in heritage activities for MC town were: 1) sense of marginalisation, 2) passion for antiquity, 3) sense of responsibility for the community, 4) awareness of loss in local values and conservation on behalf of community members, 5) providing a community learning space, 6) personal and local belief, and 7) reviving textile skills.

CASE STUDY 2: TM COMMUNITY

5.5 INTERVIEWEES

TM PKW, male, former abbot of THA temple who was a long-term leader of TM community heritage projects before his abandonment, which was caused by disgraceful rumours about him

TM CLD, male, retired primary school teacher and community activities coordinator, TM community

TM RTN, female, primary school teacher and native to TM community

TM BHU, male, 17-year-old grandson of *TM PKW* who was interested in constantly engaging in heritage activities of the community

TM SOS, male, a current abbot of TM forest temple who is a master in reading palmleaf manuscripts and inventor of the 3rd month annual ceremony

(See more details about them as well as other interviewees from each case study in the Methodology chapter, pages 84 – 89.)

5.6 MOTIVATIONS IDENTIFIED FROM THE INTERVIEWS

5.6.1 Improving quality of life from physical to spiritual and cultural dimensions

5.6.2 Language revival

5.6.3 Preservation of traditional behaviours

5.6.4 Spiritual motivations

5.6.5 Awareness of change

5.6.1 IMPROVING QUALITY OF LIFE FROM PHYSICAL TO SPIRITUAL AND CULTURAL DIMENSIONS

In order to better understand the particular motivation driven by a desire to improve life quality in various aspects which was found from the data analysis, it is necessary to mention a turning point that influenced the perception of TM community members regarding the value of local culture, especially at the village level itself. In 1975, the TM community was awarded the first prize for the best cultural village, a source of pride for the community members right up to the present. *TM RTN*, one of the interviewees, who was a teacher at TM

primary school and a native to TM community herself, had experienced this event as it occurred during her lifetime, and told the story of the contest as follows:

In 1975, I was studying at high school and TM village participated in the village contest at sub-district, district, provincial and regional levels. The criteria for the contest included everything related to culture such as clothing, local culture, and lifestyles to make a comparison with other villages. ...There was a group established to take responsibility for different tasks such as backyard gardening, silkworm feeding, bamboo weaving, silk textile producing, and cotton textile producing. ...Villagers were invited to take part in any set up groups.

(TM RTN)

Winning the award had made TM a successful model for other communities at that time. Nevertheless, this success had a long-term impact on TM community members since people of that generation constantly passed on their pride to younger generations and carried on with good practices as well as inventing social systems and reviving cultural forms in order to maintain recognition of their pride, even though the contest had taken place over 40 years ago.

It was revealed from the analysis that there were various factors that maintained the continuity of cultural value perceived by TM community members and one of them concerned a number of key individual leaders, especially religious figures. TM PKW was one of the community leaders, a monk who had been recognised as a main person engaging in development of the TM community since his youth. He played an important role in establishing the community's infrastructure, such as electricity and water supply, which helped to improve the community members' quality of life. He had experienced different ways of living from more advanced areas; thus, he felt the lack of facilities in comparison with the capital city where he had lived. He returned home and was ordained a monk in order to gain the villagers' faith and more importantly gained their support regarding the development plans that he intended to introduce to his hometown to improve the villagers' quality of life. He told them stories of his striving for a better life quality, from the beginning when seeking to provide an infrastructure such as clean water and electricity until the more recent project, cultural protection, which came after the phase of infrastructure establishment.

It began since I came back from study in Bangkok and was ordained as a monk. I saw [TM] villagers lived a very poor life quality in terms of poverty, dirtiness, less development, and lacking education. At that time, as a newly ordained monk, I realised that I had some connections with important government authorities; therefore, I started to make contacts with them to find out any potential support for the village.

(TM PKW)

One of the recent projects that TM PKW had begun but of which he could complete only the first few phases was a project related to preservation of the community's historic palmleaf manuscripts. According to the data analysis, it was clear that he had started this initiative because he had a passion for the anthropological history of the Tai ethnicity which, according to some accounts, is the origin of today's Thai people. Due to his belief in this theory (that the Tai people from Isan had populated the whole of Thailand), the analysis suggests that he possibly felt marginalised from the central region and wanted to raise Isan people's awareness of and pride in their ethnicity. This assumption suggests his motivation to conserve and revive interest in the palmleaf manuscripts and other relevant heritage activities is related to his perception of social cohesion.

I wanted to preserve the tradition and culture because the next generation may forget what nationality they are [where their ancestors came from] because nowadays people have forgotten who they are [their own roots], so now I've been thinking what to do [in order to raise awareness] to the Thais... or the Tai people whom I have studied that there is a large number of them living around the world, such as in China, and the Tai people from different places all share the same culture, for example, eating, language, and lifestyles. I found there is a lack of leader to take this action. ...Most people tend to forget their own background. ...Isan people, whose ancestors migrated along the Mekong River, normally do not pay attention to the writing [making of records] which has resulted in there being only a few written records. Therefore, these people have forgotten their own [identity] background and [this] results in prejudice from others. ...

(TM PKW)

It was also found that, in addition to the ethnic pride agenda, TM PKW also emphasised the urgent need for preserving the tradition and culture as these elements were considered as significant tools to hold community members together, which would also provide benefits for community strength. Moreover, he was also aware of the difficulty of gathering community members to participate in activities associated with cultural and traditional aspects since they were unlikely to make any financial profits in return; therefore, it was assumed that he probably had to be careful in communication with his village fellows in order to gain their support and to persuade them that heritage projects are better value than financial profits.

If I don't take action with traditional or cultural preservation, people wouldn't have anything to depend on as I see that tradition is the best key element to bind people together, nothing else could be better. ...For example, the rocket festival whose disadvantage may be the cost of having it; however, if this event could increase the stronger cooperation of the community, this ultimate achievement could balance out the cost. ...

(TM PKW)

5.6.2 LANGUAGE REVIVAL



Picture 7: The palmleaf manuscripts that had been cleaned, newly wrapped and restored resulted from the project's first phase, in which they were categorised into types of content they contained, such as shown on the paper signs in the photos, such as Isan oral folklore, ritual, tradition, and astrology. They were shelved in the

locked room of an abbot of THA temple in the TM community. TM PKW had a plan to build a cultural centre in the temple and move the manuscripts with other old traditional artefacts to be kept and exhibited there.

In addition to promoting social cohesion as well as persuading and encouraging community members to support his projects, it was also clear from the analysis that TM PKW had taken a further step, from simply preserving the local knowledge to enhancing community members' knowledge of it, by seeking support from experts at external organisations, especially from the academic sector, to provide essential knowledge and skills to the community in order to make use of their inherited wisdom written in the palmleaf manuscripts.

I wanted to engage in a cultural project because I wanted to raise awareness of the old artefacts and invited the villagers to participate in my project. Before that, the palmleaf manuscripts and other documents were in different conditions, but I took them out to clean and tie them in bundles. Later, I was thinking how to make these manuscripts accessible; therefore, I contacted the expert team from MSU University.

First of all, we have to understand the language written in these manuscripts and, if this language is accessible, it will be more useful for us.

(TM PKW)

In terms of usage of community heritage, particular from the palmleaf manuscripts, as described by TM PKW, the analysis suggests that there are associations between, firstly, the manuscript languages and identity of the community and its people, and, secondly, the manuscript content and knowledge passing through generations.

Preserving the culture isn't easy to achieve as it needs a large number of people involved to pursue it together. In regard to written languages, language scripts such as the Tai Noi, Dharma, and Khmer could make this aim possible. These written scripts are the heart of preserving written languages. They are good sources for gaining recognition from people [outside of the community]. An example [of these sources] could be the folklores, which were recorded in the palmleaf manuscripts. By reading these local stories, people would get moral teaching from the tales. Why does it have to be the tales? This is because it makes easier for people to remember from

the stories than from verbal teaching. Therefore, tales are to be told. ...Stories are best kept in palmleaf manuscripts.

(TM PKW)

The above quotation shows that TM PKW emphasised the importance of manuscript languages since their preservation also meant preserving the identity of the community because, as he pointed out, ‘*They are good sources for gaining recognition from people [outside of the community]*’, which implied a sense of marginalisation and a feeling that people outside the community might be prejudiced against it. The community could overcome these issues by having knowledge of these languages or expressing appreciation of them in order to safeguard their own identity. Moreover, the ability to identify themselves by means of their inherited languages would encourage community members to learn about and perhaps give greater value to their folklore heritage, not only to provide entertainment but also to pass on moral teaching or traditional norms of the community to younger generations.

The research also identified a young person who might be receptive to learning about heritage; this was TM BHU, a 17-year-old nephew of TM PKW. He was one of the voluntary participants in the workshop on the revival of the palmleaf manuscript languages, and he consequently learned essential skills relevant to the palmleaf manuscript conservation, making him the community’s expert in palmleaf manuscript literacy.

No, the school didn't force me to attend the workshop; I voluntarily joined it myself. PKW and my father told me about it. I myself was also interested in it as I always had doubts [about history of languages that we use nowadays] and wanted to find an answer for it. ...I had doubts about the letters we use for writing nowadays regarding their history, whether there were any other letters before the current system was in place. I used to ask this question to my father but he couldn't give me an answer. After I participated in the workshop, I finally got the answer from the workshop tutor, who told us about history of the nation and the Thai language. ...

(TM BHU)

5.6.3 PRESERVATION OF TRADITIONAL BEHAVIOURS

In relation to the points made by TM PKW, who played a significant role in the community’s heritage engagement, further investigation of the TM community revealed that he and TM

CLD had heavily involved themselves in the preservation of the community's traditional customs for a number of reasons.

One of these activities mentioned in the interview with TM PKW was the wearing of sarongs to attend religious ceremonies taking place at the community temples.

In the past, [TM] villagers could wear any clothes to attend temple ceremonies but there's a rule nowadays requiring women to leave trousers at home and instead wear skirts or sarongs to attend the main ceremonies of the community, which include the New Year, Song Kran and End of Buddhist Lent. ...I mean that at least this tradition should be preserved.

(TM PKW)

According to the above quotation, although TM PKW said that, '*In the past, [TM] villagers could wear any clothes to attend temple ceremonies...*', in the Thai context, this could be generally understood that 'any clothes' probably referred to 'traditional clothes' worn by Isan people before modern clothing became more popular and the traditional-styled clothing became less and less popular with younger generations, especially women, who would prefer wearing trousers for comfort.

Maintaining traditional dress codes seemed to be an easy strategy to gain cooperation from the majority of community members, especially women. The researcher's observation suggested that, far from resenting the reintroduction of traditional dress, female members of the community were delighted to comply with the rule and helped to promote this norm to outsiders as well. For instance, on the first day at the fieldwork research, the accommodation host told me about the norm of wearing sarongs to attend religious events and her daughter lent me a sarong to wear to an event at the temple that morning. Moreover, wearing sarongs appeared to become a tool to distinguish the community members from outsiders, as she told me that some students from a nearby university sometimes attended the temple events and wore trousers, by which the community members could identify them from the community crowd.

The wearing of sarongs by female community members was one of the traditions revived by TM community members in order that the older generation – who feared that local and

community traditions would be forgotten over time – could preserve them for younger generations. The seniors, who have lived through changes of the TM community from past to present times, had seen the value of traditional ways of living, which were reported as enhancing community bonding through enhanced cooperation, and maintaining the community's reputation as a model of good practice since becoming the winning village 40 years ago. Therefore, these factors played an important part in their motivation to preserve some of community tradition, as discussed before.

5.6.4 SPIRITUAL MOTIVATIONS

Another initiative to preserve community tradition, also derived from the traditional revival idea, is called the Rod Naam Dhum Hua tradition, which takes place during the Song Kran festival or the Thai New Year, during 12 – 14 April.

Rod Naam Dhum Hua is the name of an activity that is unique to the Song Kran festival and is practised throughout Thailand. It is to show respect to elderly people and is normally practised by younger family members such as children and grandchildren in relation to their parents and grandparents respectively, by showering their hands or the entire bodies with scented water and floating flowers and giving them presents for the New Year. It is necessary to note that the Song Kran festival is associated with water as it takes place in what is typically the hottest month of the year in Thailand and the Southeast Asian region in general, and it is usually known as the water festival. The festival is also celebrated in countries neighbouring Thailand such as Laos, Burma, and Cambodia.

In the case of the TM community, the tradition of Rod Namm Dhum Hua had been reshaped by the community members themselves more than 20 years ago, by expanding the practice from the small scale of individual families to the larger scale of a community participatory event. The practice had been taken seriously by the community members and the analysis suggests a promising future for the tradition on the basis of a mutual agreement made by all community members, who contributed to a village fund for purchasing small presents to give to those elderly people who are invited to participate in the Rod Namm Dhum Hua ritual.

... The custom of inviting old people aged 70 or more years old to be present at the Song Kran ceremony for blessing those younger villagers who came to respect them has been in place since 1993. This custom was normally practised in individual

families, but we had taken it to the public so that villagers can participate in the event as a whole not individually. [Researcher: Why was turning it into public practice better?] So that others can recall the gratitude to these old people together because, before the ceremony of pouring water on the older people's hands and asking them for their blessing, their names and ages are reported. We also give presents to them after the ceremony is completed. This ceremony was made possible because the village has established the SUTIPUPA fund, of which part of the fund was allocated for arranging presents for this event.

(TM CLD)

This particular revived tradition of Rod Namm Dhum Hua has shown a common value held by TM community members for giving great respect to the elders, and this value was considered worth preserving by the majority of community members since it had a significant linkage with the ancestral and original background of the community.

According to interviewees TM CLD and TM RTN, community members had been told the same story repeatedly: that their ancestors were the first group of people to settle in the TM community's present location, having migrated from the neighbouring country, Laos, the main leaders of the caravan being a couple named SUT and PRA, male and female respectively. Therefore, these two names were combined to make a surname when the central government required everyone to have a surname. The villagers may have looked for a simple means to invent a surname at the time and they may thought that having one that could remind them of their ancestral heroic figures could be the best option. The surname SUTIPUPA was chosen by most if not all villagers at that time to be their surname, regardless of their biological relationship. Therefore, most of the villagers today still have this surname. It has become a significant identifier of the community identity since someone's place of origin will be immediately recognised after the SUTIPUPA surname has been mentioned.

Another main person in the TM community, who was renowned for his devotion to the community's heritage preservation, was TM CLD, who was a former primary teacher in the TM community and who himself was also originally from the TM village. Other TM community members would know him as a supporting and facilitating person for various community activities, which he had been doing for all his life. Besides the initiative

concerning a local museum he had established for the village school in which he used to teach, TM CLD was also a key person in creating an impact on heritage preservation in any aspects he could think of. He used to be a regular speaker announcing community activities during religious or general events via loudspeaker announcement, the usual purpose of which was to raise donations for the events. He would take this opportunity to tell stories about the community's background, including the first two founders who migrated from Laos to settle in the present location, and stories of individuals who were born to the community and were recognised in one way or another, to remind community members about notable figures. This was especially aimed at younger generations, so that they could acknowledge the good morals of the older generations, in order to encourage them to follow the latter's good path in life so that they do not bring shame to their families and the community as a whole. For instance, there was a time when TM villagers exercised their knowledge of written languages on manuscripts such as Tai Noi scripts that they learned from the workshop to create new street signs written in this script in parallel with standard Thai scripts; thus, TM CLD took the role of facilitator to advocate raising funds for the project, and at the same time took the opportunity to fill the gap during his talk with stories relating to the community's background and noteworthy individuals native to the community. This special strategy of repeating community history appears to be unique to him as he was the only person in the TM community who had the capability to reach out to the majority of community members.

...Whilst making street signs, I was the one who kept telling stories of those people via the village loudspeaker announcement. I would tell which street was named as an honour to whom, how important that person was for the village, and I also told that the project was also supported by donation given by people of that person's lineage. ... The project was completed because of villagers' cooperation. ... Yes, I would repeatedly tell stories of those leaders in order to invite more donations as well as giving them information about village history.

(TM CLD)

To conclude from the given example of the revived tradition of Rod Namm Dhum Hua, the drivers for its preservation that could be interpreted from the analysis might entail raising awareness about the elders and increasing community bonding amongst community members for the general wellbeing of the community.

In addition to wearing skirts or sarongs to religious ceremonies at the temples and the Rod Namm Dhum Hua practices, there was another form of traditional revival discovered from the fieldwork data; however, this particular revival had taken a further step by developing an original tradition and adding more elements to it to become another tradition. The focus of the next paragraphs will be devoted to this event, which is one of the biggest events held in the TM community, and which is derived from one particular person, TM SOS, an abbot of the community's so-called forest temple.¹⁸³

TM SOS is a native of the TM community and he is highly respected by community members because he is the abbot, as well as for his status as a grandchild of TNGMA, a former priest who passed away long ago, but whose name remains recognised by members of community as the main figure of all time. TNGMA is a local hero and representative of the community's spiritual mind. The villagers call him 'Luang Puu TNGMA', of which 'Luang Puu' refers to a grandfather priest, which could imply the level of respect the villagers have for him. TM SOS was in his 60s and he also had already received the prefix 'Luang Puu' like his senior relative, priest TNGMA. Being recognised as 'Luang Puu' could be interpreted as he has received a similar respectful status to the former priest and this is inevitably involved with the values of the seniority system, in which community members retain a strong belief.

In terms of heritage preservation, TM SOS also plays a significant role, especially in association with religious tradition. Before mentioning the activities he engaged with, it is worth noting that the monk himself is a master reader of the Isan palmleaf manuscripts: he is not only able to read them but can also write the scripts with ease. With years of self-devotion to reading the manuscripts, he has become a rare person who is truly literate on the palmleaf manuscripts amongst a few other experts across the country.

TM SOS makes regular visits to Laos. As well as his personal interest in the cultural background of this neighbouring country (discussed in more detail in the chapter on Provenance), his visits also have a particular aim, which is to investigate ceremonies, especially the Boon Pha Wate, which is considered the grand ceremony of the Laotian ethnic

¹⁸³ Generally speaking, the monks of forest temples will focus more on meditation and deepening their practices than engaging with community activities; therefore, the THA temple situated in the centre of the TM community has different roles, especially providing space for community religious activities, more than would be found at the forest temple, even though they are both known as temples of the TM community.

Buddhists including in Isan communities in general. As a result of this, TM SOS could possibly be considered as a local historian and also a curator himself. He not only collected old palmleaf manuscripts, but also expanded the meaning from the text he read and re-invented a ceremony from the old text he had studied. In this sense, he is disseminating knowledge from the manuscript text by leading the villagers to celebrate the 3rd month ceremony together. The 3rd month ceremony was recently invented by TM SOS based on traditional practice as well as a combination of a few ceremonies to become one big event, as described in the following quotations.

... The 3rd month ceremony is called Boon Khao Ghee [ceremony related to sticky rice balls toasted on a coal stove for offering to the monks]. For my temple in particular, I have invented a 2nd ceremony to be celebrated at the same time and it's called Wai That [Stupa Worship] ceremony. It's an annual event that aims to invite villagers to observe the precepts by ordaining as Barhman and Barhmin [during the ceremonial days], make a donation, as well as preserving their tradition by preparing worship items for the Stupa.

It started after I found out about the 84,000 collective body of Buddha's teaching, which was written in palmleaf manuscripts and involved great detailed tradition for preparation of worship items for the teaching. Therefore, I had thought of transferring this into practice via combining it with the 3rd month ceremony as mentioned. ...This ceremony is generally quite complicated to frequent organise; therefore, ...only a few places had ever done this in the past. ...My temple has held this event more than anywhere else because the villagers have stronger faith and are more cooperative.

...I studied from the manuscripts; then, I wanted to put that into practice. After that, I had a meeting with the villagers to propose my idea and the result was successful as everyone agreed to provide support throughout the processes. If it was at other village, I don't think it would have been approved. TM village is the only place where all worship items are made complete based on instructions in the manuscripts.

(TM SOS)

The revival of the tradition as well as trying to make it as perfect as possible is a great attempt to preserve the community and Laos ethnicity heritage so that it stays with its people for longer, as well as to sustain it for the future, at least during TM SOS's lifetime. The associated donations have also enabled him to build a stupa and redecorate his temple.



Picture 8: TM SOS demonstrates the inscription of the palmleaf manuscripts.



Picture 9: A temple hall of the forest temple which is still under construction and which was inspired by the Laotian arts from a famous temple hall in the heritage town, Luang Phrabang, in Laos, which TM SOS had visited before. The abbot had also hired an artist from Lao to work on the paintings presented in the temple hall.

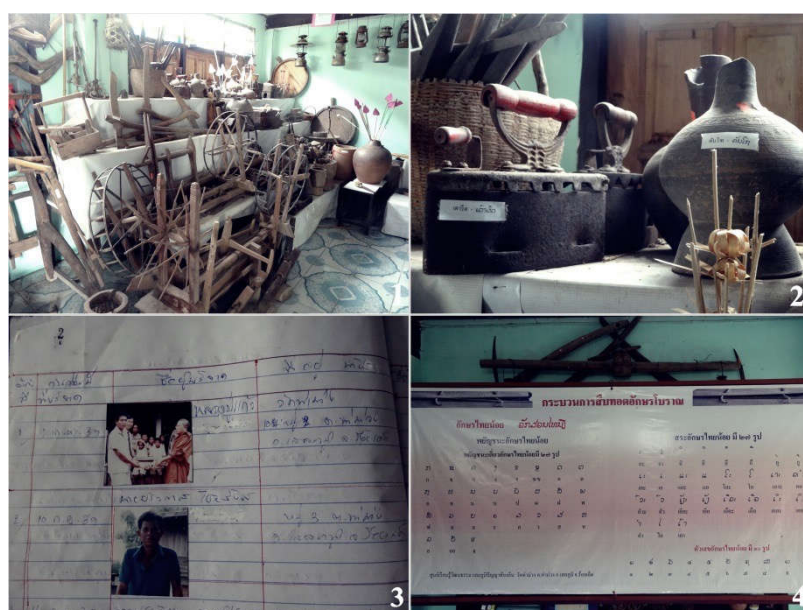
5.6.5 AWARENESS OF CHANGE

In addition to his role in raising awareness of local heritage preservation via facilitating community events and making announcements, including telling historical stories to his community fellows, as mentioned earlier, another related initiative completed by TM CLD was derived from his motivation for preserving community heritage. This particular project was to build a collection of equipment and tools which were no longer beneficial for the villagers in their daily life but which had been regularly used in the past. This equipment and tools were usually related to the agricultural livelihood that was common for most villagers approximately 40 – 50 years ago but appeared to be rarely used in their present lifestyles due to economic changes which had resulted in them depending more on urban and service industries, which are centred around the metropolitan areas. This causes the villagers to seek employment opportunities in the cities rather than staying in their hometown and following an agricultural livelihood, which is seen as a harder option. For these reasons, more of the equipment and tools were abandoned around the villagers' houses and TM CLD became interested in preserving them for potential benefits to future generations. His motivation for doing this may have implicitly been influenced by his mentality as a teacher for years, similar to the case of MC SRS for the MC Cultural Home. Moreover, there was evidence to support the possibility that his inspiration was driven by different educational trips to schools or government organisations that had initiatives relating to similar activities. This also seemed to be a trend at that time that was determined by government policies to promote 'Thai-ness' via presentation of objects related to local traditions and the culture of past Thai livelihoods.

Some items were not in use by some people anymore. After I'd seen that, I thought that they should be useful for younger generations to see. Some items began to disappear; therefore, I thought I would like to collect them and that was the beginning of this project. The school director at that time was a good supporter of my project. After I spoke via the village loudspeaker announcement, the number of donated items increased significantly. ...If someone donated anything, I would make an announcement to report about the donation. ...The villagers were very cooperative so I had plenty of donated items. They may regret throwing them away; although some items were no longer in use, they didn't see advantage in keeping them.

(TM CLD)

TM CLD's motivation to preserve his community's heritage such as outdated tools and equipment might be because he had perceived the value of those items in different ways from his fellow villagers, who donated them to his collection. Most villagers did not appreciate the objects in the same way that TM CLD did. For them, those objects were valuable once upon a time, when they could complete tasks related to daily living, whereas TM CLD may have perceived them as historical objects whose value relates to space and time, and which could tell stories and distinguish the identity of the community as a whole. Therefore, this historical value identified by TM CLD resulted in his initiative relating to the establishment of the collection.



Picture 10: Collections of tools and equipment used in the daily life of TM villagers in the past that were collected by TM CLD and kept in his old classroom at the village primary school. Description of photographs by order is as follows:

1. Tools and equipment are displayed in one corner of the classroom.
2. Labels are made to describe each tool in the exhibition.
3. A list made by TM CLD to record the items he had received from the villagers including descriptions for use of each item.
4. A vinyl board used to teach the pupils lessons of the Tai Noi, manuscript language, script.

To summarise this section about the TM community, the analysis could indicate that the motivations to maintain community heritage shown in this case study were: 1) improving quality of life from physical to spiritual and cultural dimensions, 2) language revival, 3) preservation of traditional behaviours, 4) spiritual motivations, and 5) awareness of change.

CASE STUDY 3: DS COMMUNITY

5.7 INTERVIEWEES

DS CPG, male, spiritual leader of DS community

DS ABB, male, abbot of Pone Chai temple

DS GFT, female, main curator of Phi Ta Khon museum and teacher in the Non-formal Education (NFE) office

DS GIN, male, the main responsible person for making the two giant Phi Ta Khon puppets for the annual Boon Luang festival

DS SML, male, a teacher at the NFE at DS district branch who is also head of DS GFT and leader of a small group of Phi Ta Khon performers amongst other local groups

DS TAN, female, a visitor to the festival and a producer of cultural programmes hired by the Ministry of Culture

(See more details about them as well as other interviewees from each case study in the Methodology chapter, pages 84 – 89.)

5.8 MOTIVATIONS IDENTIFIED FROM THE INTERVIEWS

5.8.1 Spiritual duty

5.8.2 Spiritual benefits

5.8.3 Communication of traditions to younger generations

5.8.4 Communication of traditions to outsiders

5.8.5 Reaction against external involvement

5.8.1 SPIRITUAL DUTY

The analysis of the DS community case study has shown a particular factor, which was heavily influential in maintaining the status quo of this community: a spiritual leader, known as Cho Poh Guan, due to his position as a medium for royal spirits that the community members respected. DS CPG was a key informant who was in the position of Chao Poh Guan at the time the interviews took place. DS community members have a high respect for their spiritual leader due to this tradition's long historical background.¹⁸⁴ DS CPG, as the main

¹⁸⁴ A brief history of the DS community is presented in order to provide some basic understanding about the community: it used to be a buffer state as its geographical location is near to the country border. Some 450 years

leader himself plays significant roles as the messenger from the royal spirits; therefore, he is a figure who is associated with the royal rulers in the past whose are believed to be the guardian spirits for the community that the community members are constantly giving respect to them via a round of ceremonies throughout the year.

Chao Poh Guan is the position specific to DS community and is descended from generation to generation.¹⁸⁵

These [the positions of Chao Poh Guan, Chao Mae Nang Tiem, Poh Saen, Nang Taeng] only belong to here, if you hear about this from somewhere else it means that is thought up by themselves with no related background.

Guan means an honest spiritual and cultural leader. It is a position. If it is a local cultural leader who leads local ceremonies, [he] will be called Guan, Guan Juem, or Poh Guan. However, in my case, [which is called Chao Poh], there is only one who take responsibility of Sri Song Rak Stupa protection as well as being a medium for the royal spirits.

(DS CPG)

ago, the kings of two kingdoms, Thailand and Laos, made a solemn agreement to maintain peace between the two lands. Therefore, the Sri Song Rak Stupa was built to be a symbol of friendship in addition to the agreement. The stupa contains the garments and decorations of members of royal families from both sides. Indeed, although lands may be determined by geographical and political reasons, people's cultural and traditional practices remain tied through the same identity, belief, and ethnicity, as in the past people could travel more freely. Therefore, DS community members share a similar culture and tradition with their neighbouring country, Laos. As a result of this peaceful commitment, the members of the community have maintained their practice of serving the royal spirits, who are symbols of their original leaders from 450 years ago. Thus, the Boon Luang festival and other religious and faith rites or ceremonies have links with spiritual worship.

¹⁸⁵ Chao Poh Guan is reserved for the DS community whereas others such as neighbouring communities or other Isan communities elsewhere normally use the term Poh Guan or Guan Jeum to refer to spiritual mediums. There is a clear sense of hierarchical classification in the terms used for calling these spiritual messengers, in that 'Chao' is the prefix to refer to a higher status of the same purposive role. Moreover, there is also a strong relationship between the DS community and the other four neighbouring villages, as the latter have to depend on the DS community's timetable when starting the Boon Pa Wate ceremonies, which can only take place after the Boon Luang festival of DS community has been completed. This kind of hierarchical relationship resembles the monarchical governing system conducted in the past where the capital (the present DS community) was protected by four frontier cities (now those other four communities) that had to listen for the command from headquarters before they could start their activities.

It was explained that recruitment of a new Chao Poh Guan was entirely based on a decision made by the royal spirit via spiritual communion with the future man for the post. Each post holder seemed to be closely related to the previous one, normally in a father/son relationship.

[He] came to be communion [with the selected person for the post]. Similar to political elections, this may cause great trouble and may create many enemies if he does not assign that by himself.

(DS CPG)

According to DS CPG, he believed that the royal spirit always made a suitable judgment regarding the person to act as his medium since this person would play an important role as its representative and thus ought to have certain moral characteristics since the royal spirit would give warnings via spiritual communion about any inappropriate incidents. Having been aware of this requirement to act as a moral model, DS CPG has adjusted his own personality and lifestyle from being an ordinary person owning a construction business and a village committee member to becoming a person who would think twice before taking action. This has shown his strong commitment to the post and respect for his community's belief as well as for the community members, who also perceived the image of Chao Poh Guan as a good model or good figure for the DS community. Moreover, DS CPG also realised that his image as Chao Poh Guan would have a significant impact on gaining trust from his community fellows.

Chao Guan is a spirit medium and an honest person who is a representative of Taan [the royal spirits] and Chao Guan is the soul. [Chao Guan is a spiritual representative of the royal spirits who has an honest mind. – The researcher's edited version.]

(DS CPG)

Based on the findings obtained from the interviews and observation in the field, it is understandable that the spiritual leading figures had a strong commitment to their roles and the responsibilities that came with those roles in that they would do their best to fulfil them without any attempt to avoid them. Not only was the role of the main spiritual leader such as Chao Poh Guan determined by the royal spirits and inherited via a bloodline, but other positions relating to his supporters were also allocated in the same way.

For instance, on the 2nd day of the field research, I experienced a welcoming ceremony for the new Chao Mae Nang Tiem at her house.¹⁸⁶ The new Chao Mae Nang Tiem was a daughter of the former one who was too ill to conduct the ritual activities; therefore, she requested the royal spirits to allow her to leave the job and her daughter was appointed to replace her. I learned that, before being appointed to the post, in her 40s, the new Chao Mae Nang Tiem had settled in Bangkok with her family for a number of years. However, as she had a strong engagement with her hometown, she had returned to take on this important role in her community once she acknowledged the requirement for her to fill the position.



Picture 11: At the welcoming ceremony for the new Chao Mae Nang Tiem. She is sitting on a chair and receiving the holy cotton thread, which is being tied around her wrist as a custom for good luck from one of the villagers who participated in the event. Chao Poh Guan is also present at the scene as the leading person for the event, at which he gave a speech and facilitated the ceremony.

There was not enough information to emphasise Chao Mae Nang Tiem's opinion on receiving her new role in the community, but others who had been appointed to different roles with regard to the spiritual mission had shown their appreciation of their given tasks in

¹⁸⁶ Chao Mae Nang Tiem is the main spiritual female leader, similar to Chao Poh Guan, but her responsibilities are seemingly less than those of the leading male figure. Thus, she is more of the supporter of his roles related to female royal spirits, such as the worship of those shrines in addition to the male royal spirit shrines. Chao Mae Nang Tiem is a relative of the same lineage as Chao Poh Guan.

relation to safeguarding their long-standing tradition, such as the example of DS CPG, whose attitude towards the duty of Chao Poh Guan was previously discussed. Moreover, despite the limited time spent on data collection, it appeared to be the most appropriate time to learn from community individuals who had engaged with their community's biggest event via their responsibilities for their roles assigned by the royal spirit, which could be seen clearly during the main festival. The analysis suggests that participating community members were eagerly taking part in the festive procedures to celebrate their tradition and that they all had different roles to support and complete the event together.

Despite the fact that there was a general concern that the impact of tourism may have changed traditional ways of practice, including the recognition that fewer and fewer young people would attend some parts of the festival (those that had religious connotations), although they tended to participate more in the Phi Ta Khon performance (which also received more support from government and private sectors than the religious ceremonies), the main community's cultural leader, DS CPG, argued that community cooperation would be a good tool to maintain the future of community tradition as this important festival had already lasted for more than 450 years.

We [refers to DS CPG and the spiritual followers – researcher's interpretation] work all year round and this is the fact. We do it not for the purpose of income but for spiritual and cultural preservation, which will lead to sustainable value and respect.

Our focus isn't to please the tourists. My role is to safeguard our culture as part of being a leader. It doesn't matter about a number of tourists coming to see the festival because it's my duty to do it anyway. Even if no one comes to see us, I and my team still have to conduct it because it is related to spiritual and cultural aspects. The outsiders have no significant impact on us. We aren't following the mainstreams but we follow our spiritual and cultural belief. Therefore, this is the main strength of it....

(DS CPG)

The analysis from observation data also supports DS CPG's argument regarding the strong commitment to duty that he and his team – including other individuals within the community who had different tasks to complete during the preparation for the festival – shared, in that all of them seemed to follow their roles and co-operate well.

5.8.2 SPIRITUAL BENEFITS

In addition to the commitment to spiritual duty already discussed in the previous section, it was also found that other community members who did not have positions in the spiritual team of Chao Poh Guan might find another motivation to support the preservation of community tradition. One such example is DS GIN, responsible for making the main male and female giant Phi Ta Khon puppets that participate in the procession every year. He was in his 60s and had inherited the role from his father and previous male ancestors. Although he had carried out the duty every year, he pointed out that it was not a compulsory one. However, he volunteered to do it because of his personal belief that he would gain spiritual benefits in return. He emphasised that the results of this action were worth his effort since there was already evidence that he and his family had gained advantages from it.

I'm doing it for my own benefit. ...I want to do good deeds. ...And my parents [ancestors] used to do the same. I believe in the results of this action which is a way of making merit that can make a better life for my family, such as we never had farmland in the past but now we do and we can also afford to buy cars. ...

(DS GIN)

His interview indicates that the driver for his commitment to make the giant Phi Ta Khon puppets related to a belief in the power of the royal spirits, for whom most members of the DS community had great respect. It is also probably worth pointing out that DS GIN himself did not know how to build the structure of the giant puppets by intertwining bamboo strips; nevertheless, he had committed neighbours who had these skills and who supported him until the job was finished. DS GIN simply had the ambition to do this job as his motivation was driven by his belief in the beneficial end results of the act, so he could be called a project leader or facilitator who would provide resources for the making processes and look after the puppets during the procession.



Picture 12: (Left) DS GIN is sitting on the stool accompanied by his two fellows who usually join him to make the giant Phi Ta Khon puppets every year. (Middle) The man is interweaving the bamboo strips for part of a puppet's arm. (Right) The male and female giant Phi Ta Khon puppets.

5.8.3 COMMUNICATION OF TRADITIONS TO YOUNGER GENERATIONS

The analysed data suggests that the motivation of community members to preserve their tradition was occasionally not obvious and could only be interpreted from their action towards the community tradition, such as for the Boon Luang Festival which was observed as part of the research.

DS SML was a group representative of the makers of Phi Ta Khon puppet masks and costumes. His group was amongst many more Phi Ta Khon puppet-making groups dispersed within the community and often found during the period of festival preparation. His general background included the facts that he was originally from the DS community, had been working for the Non-formal Education (NFE) office, DS branch, and he was head officer of DS GFT, another interviewee. Having grown up within the DS community, DS SML had been participating in his district's main festival every year, especially for the Phi Ta Khon performance. Although participation in the event was entirely voluntary, he emphasised that he never missed the opportunity to participate in the event every year. Part of his reason for taking part in the event was entertainment but his implicit motivation was also to be a good model for younger generations of Phi Ta Khon performers; he provided evidence of inappropriate behaviours by some performers, who were mostly young people.

Firstly, senior performers have to be good models for the young ones by showing them how to do the show properly and remind them to play for entertaining purpose not for harassing the audience.

(DS SML)

Furthermore, DS SML explained that traditional entertaining techniques of the Phi Ta Khon performance normally included a puppet holding a wooden carved sword with the tip mimicking a male sexual organ which the performers would use to tease the audience, especially female audience members, for a laugh. He mentioned that this action was for entertainment purposes and was essential to the authenticity of the Phi Ta Khon performance, and he attempted to pass this perception to younger generations so that they would know that this particular tool and relevant action had remained for a reason.

If there's no sword as a tool to tease the girls, this event is incomplete. There won't be an enjoyable and authentic feeling.

(DS SML)



Picture 13: DS SML demonstrating how a wooden carved sword is used during the procession to tease the audience (left); and some unfinished swords waiting to be painted (right).

Findings also suggest that external drivers appeared to significantly influence DS community members to safeguard and document their heritage. The main driver would be the overwhelming stream of tourists into the DS community, especially during the festival, and the ability of information and communications technology to transmit the DS tradition to the wider public. This resulted in community members feeling that they had lost control of their own tradition and culture, which they felt had resulted in a misleading interpretation of the community's identity.

Similarly, another interviewee reported activities in which she had been engaging with the local schools for providing knowledge on the locality to the younger generations:

We provide training lessons on basic skills for being a guide tour to school pupils to assist during the festival period in which at the same time we encourage them to safeguard their own tradition and culture. Actually, there is a plan to include content of the DS tradition within the primary school curriculum, which would be organised by the Regional Office of Education for Primary School; however, this project is an ongoing process. Moreover, every year, teachers from schools located in the DS district would regularly bring their pupils, especially those studying at nursery, grade 1 and grade 2 levels, to visit the Phi Ta Khon museum in order to educate them about the annual festival and other community traditions so that they would have awareness of community traditional and cultural values and feel the need to preserve it. We would explain to them why our tradition is important, such as it has been passed on from generation to generation for several hundred years, and we want them to preserve this tradition the same way their ancestors used to.

(DS GFT)

The above quotation provides some evidence about DS community members' motivation – particularly that of people who had responsibility for teaching the younger generations, such as school teachers and non-formal educational teachers such as DS GFT – to educate local young people to appreciate their community traditions and culture. Moreover, there had been an idea to include local studies within the school curriculum to encourage pupils in the DS district to learn about their community's heritage. Such action to preserve community heritage could have long-term results since the younger generations would have awareness and comprehension of their heritage from the beginning of their lives, which could have a lasting impact in terms of enhancing positive perceptions about heritage preservation for the long term.

5.8.4 COMMUNICATION OF TRADITIONS TO OUTSIDERS

In addition to the above discussion regarding the communication of traditions to younger generations, the analysis also shows some evidence of a desire by some community members to communicate their traditional practices and culture to outsiders in various instances.

The first example of this kind of communication was found during the interview with a group of the Phi Ta Khon mask and costumes makers led by DS SML, as mentioned in the above section. Just as he was concerned informing the younger generations about using the wooden

sword to tease the female audience members, he mentioned that it had once been misinterpreted by media reporters, which could have resulted in outsiders being mistakenly offended by this aspect of the DS community's culture.

It happened once after a TV channel 3 or 7 news report and said that DS community people were obscene because of playing with this kind of tool. They totally had no understanding about our cultural roots. After that, the DS district sheriff, on behalf of the DS people, had to correct the misunderstanding caused by the report.

(DS SML)

The quotation implies the feeling of community identity being threatened by outsiders, who lack knowledge about the DS community's traditions, so that the message conveyed to the public could have created an inappropriate image of the community. In this case, there was a happy ending as the community's reputation was saved by the sheriff, who provided a corrected message to the public after the TV broadcast. In association with this incident and the interpretation of his response to the interview, it may be inferred that DS SML was motivated to present suitable practices of Phi Ta Khon performance not only to young people in his community but also to the general public to promote mutual understanding about the DS community's identity through the Phi Ta Khon performance and to prevent any misinterpretation by the outsiders.

Moreover, there is also another example showing the need of DS community members to communicate their community traditions. At least two examples were found and could be included in the discussion of this particular issue. It is necessary to note that, although these two examples came from different interviewees, they both emphasised the idea of communication to outsiders using similar methods. The context of these interviews refers to the discussion of motivations for the establishment of two distinguished museums located within the heart of the DS community.¹⁸⁷

¹⁸⁷ Similar to the term 'learning centre', 'local museum' is another frequently encountered term for collections based in a community, both those voluntarily run by the community individuals themselves and those supported by governmental funding. These two terms are used interchangeably to represent similar kinds of local- or community-based community archives for the purpose of this thesis.

One of the DS museums is known as the Phi Ta Khon museum and is situated inside the Pong Chai temple, which is the main temple for holding major and regular religious ceremonies and community rituals including the Phi Ta Khon performance, the most popular tourist attraction. Another museum, named by DS CPG as the ‘Cultural Hall for DS Locality and Tradition’, is situated where DS CPG lives, and displays exhibitions on the Heet 12 Cong 14, the Isan monthly tradition, and awards and prizes that DS CPG had received. These two museums appeared to have significant backgrounds in relation to their establishment, in which various complicating issues had arisen. Some issues related to the motivations for these two museums will be discussed in the next section in order to address the findings in relation to internal motivation. However, other aspects of motivation behind the establishment of the two museums have also been revealed such as the communication of the community’s tradition to outsiders, which is the focus of this section.

The analysis of interviews with DS ABB and DS CPG, who were each in charge of one of the museums, suggests both individuals shared a similar initial desire to create their respective museum. It was found that both were aware of the need to publicise appropriate messages about DS community identity and they appeared to have the mutual objective of providing information about the Heet 12 Cong 14, which both regarded as the heart of DS tradition.

At that time, around 2002 - 2003, it [the Phi Ta Khon museum] was already well known by the tourists. Actually, the time when the festival started to flourish was around the year 1987 onwards because the Tourism Authority had already been promoting the festival. Therefore, big crowds of tourists would visit us every year and I started to see the limitations of access to the festival, which disappointed many tourists who were unable to participate in the event, such as failing to find a parking space, and having to leave the scene without experiencing the festival. After I learned about this problem, I came to realise that the festival would be known for its limited number of visitors who were able to participate in the festival at the real time, but most people would not have an opportunity to learn about the festival [because they were unable] to attend the festival on the spot. I thought it would be beneficial if there was a centre for learning resources that provided information and activities [about the festival]. I was thinking of a museum; however, ‘museum’ in my meaning was not referring to an official institution such as at district level; I was thinking more of a temple museum. That was my initial idea.

(DS ABB)

Similarly to DS ABB, the ‘Cultural Hall for DS Locality and Tradition’ established by DS CPG also derived from the same aim, to promote the Heet 12 Cong 14, which was mutually agreed by both museum founders as the heart of the community’s tradition and which enabled the DS community to practise its traditional lifestyles.

...I'm typically leading all rituals of the Heet 12 Cong 14 [set of 12-month ceremonies] and they [presumably referring to a research team] also had interest in this particular area; thus, came the building of this learning centre here, which was eventually completed to open in time for the festival this year. ...It [the displayed content] is based on my regular ritual practices of the Heet 12 Cong 14 tradition such as those related to the Phi Ta Khon festival and Heet 12 Cong 14, which have been emphasised at the museum exhibition.

(DS CPG)

The above confirms the perceived need for communication of the DS community’s core tradition – the Heet 12 Cong 14 – to outsiders as part of an emphasis on the community’s identity and this can be identified as a motivation for both museums, as revealed by their overseers.

In the case of DS CPG’s ‘Cultural Hall for DS Locality and Tradition’, there is also another ex-ample of communication of traditions to outsiders which was addressed during the interview with him. Even though data analysis suggests that the museum’s management plan indicates some risks, discussed in the chapter related to ‘sustainability’, pages 210 – 266, DS CPG had indicated his ambition to include foreign languages in potential sources of information about his museum, such as Chinese as well as other languages used by people in Southeast Asian countries, as he was aware of governmental policies to promote the ASEAN Economic Community (AEC), as mentioned in the quotation below.

And I think that foreign language skills are also essential [for the museum guide] so that the communication with foreign visitors would be more convenient. If there are more tourists visiting the Centre in the future, I may consider having more languages available. This is because sometimes some foreign visitors aren't accompanied by

guides; or, even if they came with their guides, the guides had to ask information from me and translate back and forth between me and the visitors. I thought that it would be better if we can communicate directly with the foreigners; even if it wouldn't be considered as perfect communication, I thought that it is better than being incapable to communicate at all. ...I used to think as well such as the Chinese language or other languages so that others can understand us; especially now multi-languages speaking is becoming more important due to the beginning of the ASEAN Economic Community (AEC) so that we have to have contact with other countries in the ASEAN region.

(DS CPG)

5.8.5 REACTION AGAINST EXTERNAL INVOLVEMENT

The previously discussed type of motivation has relevance to the desire to communicate community identity; however, the content of this section rather focuses on mild activism against governmental exploitation of heritage, over which decisions should be made by local people. However, certain financial factors had determined the stakeholders' decision making power, the results of which had left various impacts, such that the community's heritage representatives felt the need for better identity presentation. The examples in this section regarding this particular issue will continue with a discussion of the two local museums of the DS community, the Phi Ta Khon museum and the Cultural Hall for DS Locality and Tradition. Before discussing the issue, it is necessary to provide some background about the two museums in addition to what has already been mentioned, since this background is relevant to future issues which will be addressed elsewhere, including in other data analysis chapters, namely Provenance and Sustainability.

According to the analysed data from the fieldwork, the terms of the establishment of these two museums had a significant impact on their present state of affairs. By comparing both institutions, it is clear that the Phi Ta Khon museum has more complicated issues than DS CPG's 'Cultural Hall for DS Locality and Tradition', since the former was partly supported by governmental funding whereas the latter originated from personal resources.

The key person in charge of the Phi Ta Khon museum was DS ABB, abbot of Pone Chai temple, who had been involved with the museum's establishment and management from the beginning until the present day. According to DS ABB, the popularity of the DS

community's annual festival, Boon Luang and Phi Ta Khon festival, had encouraged a large number of tourists to experience the festival on site, so much so that local representatives such as DS ABB and government agencies felt the need to provide extra resources for tourists to learn more about the festival beyond the carnival period. DS ABB was aware of the limited facilities and learning resources available for large crowds of tourists, and so he was thinking of setting up a museum to promote DS community traditions, especially the Heet 12 Cong 14, which would include the annual festival of Boon Luang and the Phi Ta Khon performance. At the same time, local government agencies were also looking for space to promote the Phi Ta Khon performance, which they perceived as the main element that should be promoted for the tourists. Therefore, negotiations between local government agencies in conjunction with the Thai Tourism Authority and DS ABB had begun since the official party was interested in the old monastic residential building, where DS ABB also wanted to build a temple museum, and had offered the money for the refurbishing fund. Since the agreement between these stakeholders was determined by allocated funding from the official section, the abbot lost control of decision making on the design of the museum's content, so he had to postpone his intention to promote information about the core tradition, Heet 12 Cong 14, and had to allow the government to promote more content on the Phi Ta Khon performance instead. The only evidence for the motivation of the government agencies is the statements of the community members interviewed, which therefore needs to be treated with caution; nevertheless, their perception that there were opposing views was clear. DS ABB confirmed in the interview that his motivation to represent the identity of the DS community by concentrating more on the Heet 12 Cong 14 tradition remained active, as he had been working with his team to photograph procedures of the annual festival and wished to revise the museum content with other stakeholders in a few years, if possible.

...This year, the school started to use this information [about the Heet 12 Cong 14 tradition – the researcher's note] to support content on PowerPoint for school presenting to the school's visitors. So the school has already started, whereas we are not very confident on the content, which needs to be checked with the older people for confirmation first. ...However, I always repeated to them that whatever data is collected without knowing exactly what it is, they have to make sure to keep the photographs of that process. Then they can show those photographs to the older people for further explanation in order to fill in the missing information. I repeated to them not to describe a thing from their own minds if they don't know what it is. That is

my rule. However, the most important is to get as many photographs of the activity processes as possible because it isn't always possible to get information from the person while he/she is working immediately on the site, because they are still busy and not ready to give information. I heard some complaint from the villagers that they couldn't focus on their tasks well while being interviewed; therefore, this made me think that the villagers may give information out very quickly just to finish the interview. Therefore, I came to the conclusion that it is better to take as many photographs as possible... meaning to focus on the activities they are doing and then it is better to go back for the interviews when they are more convenient.

(DS ABB)

The above analysis of the background of the Phi Ta Khon museum shows the complicated situation that has resulted in its long-term condition, leading to sustainability issues which will be discussed later. However, one obvious impact that was mentioned regards the content displayed in museum exhibitions, where DS ABB felt the most important content for the Heet 12 Cong 14 was lacking and that content revision was required to complete the representation of the DS community's identity.

...and it is for sure that content inside of the museum will need to be revised until they are complete before re-installing the exhibition. ...I reckon this might take around three to four years to be completed.

(DS ABB)



Picture 14: The former monks' residential annexe which had been converted into the Phi Ta Khon museum. The left wing of the building houses a recreation space and exhibition on Phi Ta Khon and some brief

information on the Heet 12 Cong 14 tradition. The right wing holds an exhibition of different parts of Phi Ta Khon puppets as well as the full body of Phi Ta Khon models. There is a space called a library at the entrance of the building and the terrace at its front is the space where models of giant and ordinary Phi Ta Khon puppets are displayed.

The analysis suggests that the recent emergence of another museum within the same community, the Cultural Hall for DS Locality and Tradition, supported by DS CPG, was significantly influenced by the failure to represent the DS community's identity via the Phi Ta Khon museum. It was obvious that it was not only DS ABB who felt the need for content improvement; DS CPG, who had an important role for the community, also perceived the same insufficiency and introduced a solution to that problem in his own way, which was to establish another museum, designed by himself on behalf of the royal spirits and located within his residential complex. A university lecturer, RTNA, was the main person who made available the content of the museum; nevertheless, DS CPG worked closely with her to approve the content and the design of the exhibition inside the museum.¹⁸⁸

This space was empty before the museum was built and the project was started last year, aiming to be a learning centre for public usage. My intention is for nothing but to strengthen the culture and to provide information to the general public. Moreover, it is also to house the awards I received such as the Thai Scholarly Teacher, Thailand Headlines Person of The Year, and Honorary PhD in Social Development.

Yes, it is different from that one [Phi Ta Khon museum] because the focus of that museum is on a specific event of the Phi Ta Khon performance with some extra information on other traditional events, although it does not focus on these. On the other hand, the focus of my museum is inclusive over 12 months without dispersion of information; therefore, the detail of each monthly practice is rigorously displayed. ...All content had to be approved and fulfilled by me including any models for display. ... And if the spirits did not approve, the project would have had to be cancelled.

(DS CPG)

¹⁸⁸ The researcher did not have the opportunity to interview RTNA during the data collection due to the limited amount of time and because she did not reside in the DS community.

In addition to his perception that there was insufficient information about the main tradition, Heet 12 Cong 14, presented in the Phi Ta Khon museum, further investigation from the above quotations indicates the noteworthy drivers implicated in his decision making to establish the museum, which can be summarised as follows:

- 1) His role as the spiritual leader gave him an advantage in speaking on behalf of all DS community members regarding the lack of information on the community's core tradition, which was missing from the governmentally supported museum. His project represents the voice of heritage ownership which came from the community members' genuine need rather than that arranged by the government sector.
- 2) The location of his museum was at his residence, which was perceived by community members as their spiritual centre; thus, it was genuinely a community space which might provide a more convenient atmosphere for access to learning about the community's tradition and culture.



Picture 15: The exterior of DS CPG's 'Cultural Hall for DS Locality and Tradition' – the front of the building (left) and the entrance to the exhibition (right)



Picture 16: Scenes inside the Cultural Hall displaying the awards presented to DS CPG on different occasions (left) and the temporary exhibition about Heet 12 Cong 14, of which the drawings of each practice are intended to be replaced by the 3D pictures in the future (right).



Picture 17: A model of the Boon Luang and Phi Ta Khon festival displayed in a glass cabinet (left); some examples of essential tools used for the Boon Luang festival that the villagers have to prepare every year are also displayed in the next glass cabinet (right).

This section has discussed the DS community's motivations for heritage documentation: 1) spiritual duty, 2) spiritual benefits, 3) communication of traditions to younger generations, 4) communication of traditions to outsiders, and 5) reaction against external involvement.

CASE STUDY 4: GAL

5.9 INTERVIEWEES

GAL MON, female, co-founder of GAL

GAL NBA, male, a monk who used to participate in GAL's mobile exhibition on the temple theme and donated some of the photographs in the GAL collection

GAL NUI, male, an ex-committee member of the SR provincial cultural association

GAL SOM, male, a retired government officer who lived in the city of SR

GAL DSW, female, the owner of a small home-stay hotel in SR city centre

(See more details about them as well as other interviewees from each case study in the Methodology chapter, pages 84 – 89.)

5.10 MOTIVATIONS IDENTIFIED FROM THE INTERVIEWS

Before discussing the motivations in regard to the case study – GAL – it is necessary to mention some constraints during the data collection processes that consequently affected the data interpretation, meaning that some relevant phenomena may be impossible to discuss within the context of this case study.

These restrictions include the following areas:

- 1) Firstly, the organisation, GAL, was purposely selected as its activities seemed to correspond well with definition of 'community archive' suggested by Western literature and it was managed by a group of volunteers. However, the main three volunteers interviewed here may not necessarily be members of the communities they are documenting; therefore, the perspective of the documented community cannot be identified from the interview data.
- 2) Secondly, the data collection was limited to the main group of staff who managed the organisation and excluding the external stakeholders, particularly the governor, who was instrumental in setting up the gallery as a physical space. For this reason, the motivation of the external stakeholders can only be represented through the perceptions of the internal stakeholders.

GAL demonstrated specific issues distinct from the other case studies in terms of motivations, since its background was completely different from them as it was representing a more formal form of community archive that was managed by volunteers on behalf of the communities they cared for. The analysis shows that the background played a significant role in directing the organisation from where it began to the end; therefore, the following sections will include some descriptive information about the organisation's background and a discussion of the data analysis respectively.

The establishment of GAL had a substantial political dimension that led to difficulties in management of the institution itself. The findings revealed that local government and politicians had always been critical steersmen of GAL's performance. This resulted from core financial dependency on the yearly provision of the local government allocation, which involved an inconsistent budget year by year. It was clear that the establishment of GAL was problematic from the beginning, lacking good planning and policies, and most importantly did not involve all stakeholders, especially the key staff, to form the agreement together. It is necessary to mention that GAL was established with the agreement of three partners, namely the city council (for yearly financial support to GAL), the RML University (who owned the building in which GAL was hosted), and the GAL team (who would be in charge of organisational management). The findings revealed that GAL continually struggled for sustainability due to the three partnership organisations' fundamentally conflicting perceptions of their GAL responsibilities. Nevertheless, the GAL organisation was managed by a group of three people, GAL MON, GAL JIB and GAL PHN, although they were also part of a bigger association called the SR Samosorn, which was compared to a history association concerning a specific province, hereafter SR.¹⁸⁹

Motivations regarding GAL's establishment are listed below and described in the following sections.

5.10.1 Allocating a 'genuine' representative of community space

5.10.2 Raising the voices of the marginalised communities through publications based on collected archival materials

¹⁸⁹ GAL MON and GAL JIB were the main founders of GAL. GAL MON was responsible for general management while GAL JIB supervised the content of the organisation's publications. GAL PHN was the main administrator and regular researcher.

5.10.3 Modelling appropriate relations between communities and external organisations

5.10.1 ALLOCATING A ‘GENUINE’ REPRESENTATIVE OF COMMUNITY SPACE

In order to understand their motivations for establishing GAL, it is necessary to know the main characters of this organisation: GAL MON and GAL JIB.

The interviews with GAL MON (the founder, who had the main responsibility for management issues) suggested that the motivation to set up GAL was influenced by his and GAL JIB's background in local historical research, as they had been part of a local historical society, SR Samosorn. Together with a local university team, the society produced and disseminated a local history journal in the locality of SR province for a number of years until the publication was discontinued. Therefore, their original motivation of disseminating knowledge on local history had been carried on and rebranded under the name of the gallery, GAL.

I used to read a periodical, JSR, produced by SRU University and I began to take part in the publication team after I resigned from an NGO job. This was in 2005. I began to help them with the field research by interviewing the villagers. ...[GAL JIB and] I worked with them for six years before we decided to leave the group because there was a conflict about budget spending. Honestly, I did not know whether the financial processes were dubious or not, but we as the workers never had any benefit from the work, we just sincerely wanted to help. Therefore, we did not like to work there anymore, so we quit and started to publish our own publication, called SR Samosorn named after our [local history] group.

(GAL MON)

Even though the main motivation was said to be focused on the historical perspective, the observational data suggested that the previous background of the founders, especially GAL MON, should also be taken into account for the desire to establish the organisation.

According to her previous work with a non-profit organisation, the interview with GAL MON implied she had a strong attitude against the intervention of the Thai state in the lives of rural villagers who had been exploited by government policies.

[Before the outset of the Thai-Cambodia border dispute over the area of Preah Vihear Temple] In 2007, I crossed the border to Cambodia to interview the Cambodian villagers about friendship and cultural relationships across the borders between the two nations. ...I enjoyed listening to their stories very much and they were very nice to me. ...I barely spoke their language but I was surely never starving or arrested. ...No, [I] never experienced hatred. This is the myth of the Bangkokian and the Phnom Penh people created via mass media.

(GAL MON)

Since the work of non-profit organisations (NGOs) was generally known for its social justice aims, it may be inferred that GAL could be categorised as an activism type of community archive similar to those familiar from Western literature.¹⁹⁰

GAL MON reported that, before having a building, as although GAL was a formal organisation, she and the team were quite flexible in their working styles, in relation to their hours and places of work. They would organise mobile exhibitions” at different areas within SR town centre, such as the city hall and the train station, as well as at other communities in the province based on requirements from local institutions such as schools or temples, or sometimes they decided the themes of the exhibition themselves based on public interest in specific topics at the time.

Our work [content] is changeable [flexible] as it is not fixed with tangible objects. I mean that we can change the theme [of the photographs] any time. These photographs [on display in the GAL] could be removed and stored for future use or access by our users. ...We can change and select suitable content to present at a suitable time such as we can observe the need of local schools or general public's interest at a specific time.

¹⁹⁰ The NGOs for social justice agenda, such as a number of HIV/AIDS organisations in Thailand; see further in Mameli, P.A. 2001. 'Splitting the Difference: Partnering with Non-Governmental Organizations to Manage HIV/AIDS Epidemics in Australia and Thailand', *Human Rights Review*, 2: 93-112; and the Women NGOs in Thailand discussed by Mitsamphanta, S. 2014. 'Women NGOs' movement for fighting against domestic violence', in Liamputtong, P. (ed.) *Contemporary Socio-Cultural and Political Perspectives in Thailand* (London: Springer Netherlands), pp. 328-344

Relevant literature written by Western scholars includes Flinn, A. 2011. *Archival activism: independent and community-led archives, radical public history and the heritage professions* (California: eScholarship, University of California); and Caswell, M. 2014. 'Toward a survivor-centered approach to records documenting human rights abuse: lessons from community archives', *Archival Science*, 14, pp.307-322

(GAL MON)

Moreover, she also indicated that, although a temple might be more friendly and welcoming in comparison with the formal style of partnership organisation such as GAL, the fact that GAL was chosen to exist emphasised the importance of community power in terms of the perception that their local history should be represented and acknowledged by the government sector, in order to be accepted within the mainstream culture of SR society.

I also think that here [GAL] is representing the power of the communities as it is considered a community/social space. My friends encouraged me to persist with the place because GAL is the space of citizenship power and its existence means this power also remains. At present, only GAL and the Green Market are representatives of space for local people. This is the reason for us to continue. ... A temple is also a public space but here it is different because it remains to counterbalance politicians' power.

(GAL MON)

An analysis suggests that the reason for its location was mainly to act against the mainstream or government organisations which GAL leaders perceived as opponents to the grassroots that GAL's work supported. Therefore, in order to ensure the space represents the ordinary group of people, the ideal space must be situated in government areas. Consequently, GAL's location was approved by the then provincial mayor, who valued cultural works such as those proposed by the GAL team. Hence, the fact that GAL's leaders were successful in taking over the building and transforming it into a space for telling stories about the grassroots was believed by its staff to be a great achievement, since the space for storytelling, displaying photographs and producing relevant publications was situated in the heart of the government sector; thus, the feeling of fulfilment, as illustrated by the above quotation, once GAL MON explained about the frustration caused by the contrast in perceptions of GAL's work amongst the partnered organisations. The quotation shows that GAL was seen by its staff as a community space and that the motivation was community empowerment.

5.10.2 RAISING THE VOICES OF THE MARGINALISED COMMUNITIES THROUGH PUBLICATIONS BASED ON COLLECTED ARCHIVAL MATERIALS

In addition to contesting inequality in SR society by making available a ‘genuine’ space for grassroots communities, the further aim of the founders – which was considered to be GAL’s most important duty – was to safeguard and promote the identities of the represented communities through publications produced by GAL.

According to the interviews, it was revealed that the collected photographs, which were the main materials held by GAL, were selected for the purpose of exhibition on the site whilst most of the photographic collections were kept at GAL MON’s house. This practice was confirmed for reasons of security and suitable storing conditions, as GAL was considered to lack these supporting facilities. Furthermore, this decision by GAL staff has implications for ease of access to most of the collections apart from in that those at GAL MON’s house would not be easily accessible, in contrast to those in GAL itself.

In order to achieve their main social justice aims, the GAL staff’s strategy was to collect and use photographs for research purposes, especially historical research into the local communities of the SR province. Their motivation was, according to GAL MON, “*to represent a series of communities’ local wisdom*”, not to collect original materials, which they lacked both the facilities and skills to preserve. The determination to promote communities on behalf of the community members was clear and could be proved from their publications, which had been produced for years – since they were part of the SR Samosorn Association until they took more responsibility for GAL work in order to continue the same goal: to promote individual communities within SR society which may have been forgotten or overlooked by government agencies or mainstream organisations. To achieve this goal, they had been using their expertise in providing education about local history, especially raising awareness of local wisdom, which is the implicit knowledge of different communities. Their ultimate attempt with regard to this area is as per the following statement.

We normally spent a good quality of time with the villagers. What I'm going to say now may sound overstated, but the work driven by SR Samosorn Association [of which we are part] has set new standards of academic research with communities. As a result, university researchers, who may visit the same communities we had conducted research with before, would get questions from the villagers regarding

comparison of reasonable payment for their time. For example, the village of silversmiths, where we actually bought silver for the participants including reasonable payment for their time to demonstrate the processes of making silverwork, and left the product with the village for further education after completion of our research; whereas the university researchers would criticise our work by saying that these areas of silverwork and elephants were already thoroughly researched by others. Moreover, the fact that we left the end result of the silverwork with the community surprised the villagers since they always experienced researchers taking away the products after the research was completed because they had paid for the silver. However, this is the way we work with communities, which changed community expectation towards academic research. They would raise questions to the university researchers about the different practices they have received from them and us, and wondered why we as non-academic staff could do it but not them.

(GAL MON)

5.10.3 MODELLING APPROPRIATE RELATIONS BETWEEN COMMUNITIES AND EXTERNAL ORGANISATIONS

In addition to their attempt to promote the diversity and equality of identities existing in SR society, another motivation in the work of GAL, as suggested by the data analysis, was to gain recognition for the organisation itself from the more powerful organisations in the public sector.

For example, the change of content in the annual reports from City Hall from an emphasis on the collective work of the Mayor during the whole year to recent issues of the report in which the content was concentrated on activities of local communities instead whilst the collective work of the Mayor would be presented at the back of the issue. ...This is the new trend occurring in SR locality. For example, the Provincial Administrative Organization (PAO) [the organisation that hired the GAL team to research silver-making community] was never interested in the area of local wisdom before. If thinking only about the amount of money [offered to complete this project] for 100,000 THB, it was totally insufficient to cover all research costs. However, it is worthwhile in terms of getting interest from local politicians to widely publicise distribution of the local wisdom. Having said that the amount of money seemed insufficient, it was actually the highest budget they ever approved to any

organisations in the past and they never made any bargain with us either. ...This is the new trend which had an impact on the content of government publications, which started to include stories from communities for their local wisdom. These are some issues of the annual reports since three years ago which include stories based on the work of GAL which we had completed in the past regarding local wisdom from different communities. ...Another publication was an e-book entitled 'The Friendship Cities', which had no budget for printing, and we were hired to do this project for collecting data on attitudes of individuals in certain communities [on the borders of Thailand and Cambodia] in order to learn more about local communities rather than focusing on reports of minutes of committees like in the past. ...I think this is the most visible example of work by the SR Samosorn Association being able to gradually change the perception of local people for the last 10 years since it was established. ...The first public event was in 2004, when we arranged 'Stories from old photographs'. However, the group [SR Samosorn Association] had been around before since we consistently contribute articles for the JSR journal.

(GAL MON)

The above lengthy statement from the interview with GAL MON reveals that the GAL research team felt that they should gain more recognition from mainstream society or more benefits from the government's development policies.



Picture 18: The exterior of the GAL building from the front.

This section has discussed GAL's motivations to preserve stories of the SR province and the ethnicity within its vicinity as follows: 1) allocating a 'genuine' representative of community space, 2) raising the voices of the marginalised communities through publications based on collected archival materials, and 3) modelling appropriate relations between communities and external organisations.

5.11 CONCLUSION

This chapter has discussed the motivations for self-documentation and heritage preservation revealed from the data analysis of each studied community. A number of similarities and differences have been noted in the factors driving community members to engage in various actions for their heritage safeguarding. The table below lists these motivations.

Table 1: Motivations for self-documentation listed by case study

Case study	Themes
MC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sense of marginalisation • Passion for antiquity • Sense of responsibility for the community • Awareness of loss of local values and conservation on behalf of community members • Providing a community learning space • Personal and local belief • Reviving textile skills
TM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improving quality of life from physical to spiritual and cultural dimensions • Language revival • Preservation of traditional behaviours • Spiritual motivations • Awareness of change
DS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spiritual duty • Spiritual benefits • Communication of traditions to younger generations • Communication of traditions to outsiders • Reaction against external involvement
GAL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allocating a 'genuine' representative of community space • Raising the voices of the marginalised communities through publications based on

	collected archival materials • Modelling appropriate relations between communities and external organisations
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The table presents the aspects of motivation found from each case study in bullet points summarised from what has already been discussed in this chapter. These areas of motivation demonstrate some similarities and differences. Taking a step beyond the primary analysis of data, for example, from the above list, it is possible to conclude that the motivations discussed are those of the key individuals interviewed.

The analysis indicates that external experience had a significant impact on these key individuals in their desire to change perceptions about the status quo of their communities. They were especially stimulated by the perception of the inequality of life between urban areas, where they had gained experience of the luxuries in life, and their hometown, which were located in the poorest region of the country. Therefore, the comparison of quality of life had led to the feeling of marginalisation, which was enhanced by governmental policies at that time, especially during the development of infrastructure in the country and the promotion of Thai-ness.

In addition to being influenced by modernity, which brought greater differentiation between urban and rural areas, another factor gained from external experience which also influenced the key individuals' perceptions was the advanced education and cultural trips obtained from outside of their own communities. Seeing the differences in educational system and life experience outside of their original environments had enhanced their perception of heritage value, making them aware of loss and change shaped by temporal circumstances. This particular perception about change through time had resulted in both advantages and disadvantage to community heritage safeguarding and preservation, especially as was found from the cases of MC and TM, which were village-based communities. These two cases were similar in that the people leading the community documentation and heritage preservation were keen to modify cultural and traditional elements of their communities in order to preserve them for the long term, to serve the next generations. They were the leaders for re-producing local history and culture such as the language revival, reviving traditional behaviours such as sarong-wearing, community storytelling and re-invention of the 3rd month religious ceremony of the TM community. There was also evidence of an awareness that reviving community skills can have economic value, as in the development of local textile

design based on the traditional designs learned from the ancestors in order to add value to the local fabric products, and the promotion of local customs for tourism purposes (notwithstanding the associated problems).

DS seems more aware of the external threats than other communities because of the impact of tourism on the motivations; however, both DS and TM demonstrate the problems of mixed motivations. Even though there was implicit evidence of identity assertion within the DS community, which had to bring in all stakeholders to find a suitable solution amongst themselves, there was evidence of educational motivation, which was common to the DS and TM communities, and that the educational background of key individuals – both MC and TM – seemed to have shaped their motivations.

In relation to supplementing the school curriculum with local studies, it is noticeable from all the case studies that the idea of having a ‘learning centre’ is widespread in Thai communities and the leading people in a community would normally feel obliged to provide such a space for their community to house heritage materials that are valuable for younger generations.

A further impact actuated by community key individuals concerned their main role in stimulating community cohesion. This could be found clearly from the cases of the TM and DS communities, where the Thai tradition of respect for elders was integrated into the livelihood of community members.

To conclude, this chapter has discussed the four case studies’ motivations for heritage safeguarding, with the findings showing that key individuals involved in the heritage collections or activities in each case appear to play a significant role in driving the heritage initiatives in their communities. Moreover, factors that trigger the key individuals’ enthusiasm to take action on heritage safeguarding include the impact of national policies on inequality of development between central and Isan regions, leading to a sense of marginalisation on the part of the key individuals who used to live outside of their Isan communities and in the central area, especially the capital, before.

The influence of the government’s centralisation policies has resulted in the feeling of cultural change and loss by the key individuals, as perceived by MC SRS, TM PKW, and TM CLD. As for the community, where spiritual belief has been rooted into long tradition and

lifestyles such as presented by the practice of DS community members, the spiritual leader tends to be the key person supporting the community's cultural and traditional practices since his spiritual duty is very much tied up with the spiritual services that he has been providing to the community. Similar to the DS community, TM community members shows strong support for religious institutions; therefore, the monks have become an important part of the community's cultural and traditional support. The building of a 'learning centre' was a popular trend, as well as being believed by most key individuals from the case studies to be an educational space for community members – especially young ones – to learn about history through both tangible heritage (e.g. collections of old items and palmleaf manuscripts) and intangible heritage (e.g. a gathering space for learning languages inscribed in the manuscripts). In terms of 'space' for traditional and cultural learning and engagement, it appears that different case studies reveal different perceptions of its meaning and thus the purpose of using the space could vary, depending on the key individuals' priorities. MC, TM and DS communities present the perception of traditional and cultural loss more than GAL, as the latter's 'space' is situated apart from the community it is meant to represent with the main agenda being to raise their voices to the mainstream or government sector.

The motivation of the key individuals from each case study is the fundamental move for understanding of the importance of heritage safeguarding. To establish a better understanding about Thai community archives, the next chapter will provide a discussion of the findings on 'provenance', and it will be clear that the motivations and decision making on collections and activities preferred by each case study are significantly related.

CHAPTER 6

PROVENANCE

6.1 INTRODUCTION

The literature review regarding the ‘community archives movement’, which was discussed in Chapter 3 (pages 42 - 62), showed that issues concerning ‘provenance’ discussed by scholars from the Western world can relate to a variety of areas including appraisal (post)custody, description, ownership, and identity. The reason for this variety is possibly because the concept of provenance, which has been identified as the ultimate principle of archival science – which discloses the origin of the archival materials, especially referring to the record creators – involves different kinds of factors that will help to identify and authenticate the content and context of a preserved record.¹⁹¹ Therefore, ‘provenance’ usually relates to the appraisal and description aspects of archival practice.

The re-conceptualisation of ‘provenance’ in scholarly debates from the 1990s onwards has identified that archival provenance may concern both physical and societal aspects of the records. The latter has significant importance for the area of community archival management since the concept has broadened relevant perspectives on creation of a record from the origin to the co-creators in different stages of the record’s lifecycle.¹⁹² Australian scholars in particular were responsible for developing the concepts of ‘parallel provenance’ and ‘record continuum’ that identified the various facets of a record that could be changeable

¹⁹¹ Barr, D. Winter 1987 - 88. 'The fonds concept in the Working Group on Archival Descriptive Standards Report', *Archivaria*, 25, pp.163-170; Bastian, J.A. 2003 - 2004. 'In a "House of Memory": Discovering the Provenance of Place', *Archival Issues*, 28: 1, pp.9-19; Cook, T. Spring 1993. 'The concept of the archival fonds in the post-custodial era: theory, problems and solutions', *Archivaria*, 35, pp.24-37; Harris, V. 2002. 'The archival sliver: Power, memory, and archives in South Africa', *Archival Science*, 2, pp.63-86; Hurley, C. 2005. 'Parallel Provenance (if these are your records, where are your stories?)', pp.1-43; Ketelaar, E. 2008. 'Archives as Spaces of Memory', *Journal of the Society of Archivists*, 29, pp.9-27; Millar, L. 2002. 'The Death of the Fonds and the Resurrection of Provenance: Archival Context in Space and Time', *Archivaria*, 53, pp.1-15; Nesmith, T. 1999. 'Still Fuzzy, But More Accurate: Some Thoughts on the Ghosts of Archival Theory', *Archivaria*, 47, pp.136-150; Niu, J. 2013. 'Provenance: crossing boundaries', *Archives and Manuscripts*, 41, pp.105-115; Wurl, J. 2005. 'Ethnicity as Provenance: In Search of Values and Principles for Documenting the Immigrant Experience', 29:1, pp.65-76

¹⁹² Nesmith, T. 2006. 'The concept of societal provenance and records of nineteenth-century Aboriginal-European relations in Western Canada: Implications for archival theory and practice', *Archival Science*, 6, pp.351-360

based on different circumstances, causing the dynamism of the record for as long as it is still in use.¹⁹³

Furthermore, this literature suggests that societal provenance could be expanded to cover the areas of historical context, especially that of relevance to the marginalisation of ‘communities of records’ (to use the phrase coined by Jeannette Bastian and later extensively adopted in a range of articles by Eric Ketelaar), in that records of ordinary communities were excluded from traditional repositories, thus making those communities invisible to the public. This social exclusion could have a significant impact on ownership and custody, which embrace issues around democratisation and participatory or collaborative appraisal, and the relationship between community and traditional archives, including the roles of archival and record professionals. Moreover, to ensure that community members’ voices would not be neglected, it has been argued that it is necessary to include any type of community records, be they tangible or intangible, textual or otherwise, as long as they have meaning and value to represent the community’s identities. Such ‘records’ may include statues, performances and landscapes. According to the literature, it is their community provenance (defined both in terms of origin and ongoing connection) that defines these items as ‘archival’. As will be shown, this understanding was fundamental to the present research, because – as will be explained – the Thai communities studied did not describe their collections as archives. Nevertheless, this research proposes that the commonalities identified between Thai understandings of the meaning and value of their holdings in relation to their provenance can allow them to be viewed through an archival lens. This allows for the possibility of developing a deeper understanding of community archiving, both in Thailand and more generally, and also uncovers areas of potential tension, where the understanding of provenance practised by those responsible for collecting Thai community materials needs to be appreciated in order to understand the nature of the collections. The questions addressed in this chapter therefore are: What understandings of ‘provenance’ can be identified in association with Thai community collections? How do these relate to understandings explored in existing literature? How do these understandings develop from and/or inform practice in relation to the collections?

¹⁹³ Hurley, C. 2005. ‘Parallel Provenance (if these are your records, where are your stories?)’, pp.1-43; Piggott, M. 2012. *Archives and societal provenance: Australian essays* (Oxford, UK: Chandos)

6.2 METHODOLOGY

Provenance was identified as a significant issue for further analysis through the data analysis process. As previously described, interview transcriptions were encoded and a number of codes were identified as being relevant to provenance. These were: acquisition policies, nature of holdings, methods of acquiring materials for collections (in the case of tangible heritage), practices and content of description, such as labels and photograph captions, archival policies, processes of preservation and/or accessibility to the archives if there is any, availability of working manuals or policies, and self-defining of ‘community’ and ‘community archives’ based on the interviewees’ understanding.

Having been aware of the areas relevant to provenance discussed by scholars from the Western context, ‘Phase One’ of my research fieldtrip had suggested somewhat different situations in Thai communities in terms of their heritage activities that were related to provenance concerns. For instance, it was noticeable that the relationship between community-based archives and mainstream archives was blurred, as the initial findings from ‘Phase One’ suggested no evidence of interaction between such institutions, but other external organisations such as university academics in other cultural and information disciplines appeared to play more important roles than traditional archival professions. The lack of any interface between community collections and traditional repositories meant that none of the communities defined their holdings as an archive, meaning that discussion of ‘archival’ issues needed to negotiate the lack of a shared vocabulary. This had an impact on the choice of research methods (as discussed below). The issue of definitions is discussed in Chapter 3, The Community Archives Movement (pages 42 - 62). The lack of any relationship between ‘traditional’ archivists (those working in governmental and institutional archives) and groups of community heritage activists clearly related to the exclusion of community materials from traditional archives as they were unlikely to fit into collection policies of the traditional archives; therefore, materials that might be identified as ‘community archives’ were mostly in the custody of the community members whose knowledge and skills in archival management were, unsurprisingly, incommensurate with standards of traditional archives in the developed world.¹⁹⁴ This was the main observation from ‘Phase One’, along with the recognition of some challenges that the Thai communities seemed to face more than

¹⁹⁴ More research needs to be undertaken to confirm this hypothesis and only a few traditional repositories in Thailand are actively collecting repositories from communities, as government archives only take government records.

did the West, such as resources, which have also been covered in the chapter on ‘sustainability’.

Moreover, it was recognised that other relevant issues of provenance discussed in the Western literature previously mentioned, such as identity concerns, history and heritage value, and information relating to archival practices, could not be easily investigated solely through analysis of the interview data, but could be analysed through observation as a method of data gathering, especially in relation to aspects of intangible heritage.

Following this paragraph is a list of questions extracted from the semi-structured questionnaire, which help to investigate the issues referred to in the previous paragraph. Because provenance had been identified as an issue of potential significance to community archiving, the interview questions were designed to draw out interviewees’ understanding of this notion, using concepts with which it was hoped they would have been readily familiar.

(Tangible) What do you call these materials that you have collected in your house or organisation?

(Intangible) How would you describe this event that takes place every year in this community?

The researcher also provided a list of words which have been used to identify an archive (see list in Appendix B, pages 342 – 357). Nevertheless, it is necessary to note that the full list of words did not apply in practice since it was found inconvenient to do so during the interview being conducted; therefore, the researcher had reduced a number of words into five based on her sense of which amongst those words were most popular in use. These included: records of community heritage, local history club, cultural centre, community archive, and museum.

The following questions were then posed:

Do you have other storage located somewhere else besides this display space/building?

(If yes)

- Why do you keep items/material there?

- Who is the owner of that space?
- What is it like?
- Is it accessible by a general, interested audience?

Can anyone visit this collection/gallery?

How do you introduce/describe these materials to the visitors?

Accessibility (Tangible)

- Has there been any occasion that the visitors want to borrow, use or research your materials? Would you allow them to do so?
- How do you assess the appropriateness of the request?

Accessibility (Intangible)

- Do you explain the ceremony/event to the outsiders/non-participants?
- In the case that your community heritage has been recorded, preserved or represented by other parties such as the local museum or the tourism authority, have you been involved with their interpretation?
- Are you happy with the way the event was recorded/represented?

In your own words, how would you define your community?

How do you think this collection benefits the community (or anyone else)?

- Who is it for?
- Are there other stakeholders?

CASE STUDY 1: INDIVIDUAL COLLECTOR AND OWNER OF MC CULTURAL HOME

6.3 INTERVIEWEES

MC SRS, male, an individual collector and the owner of MC Cultural Home

MC NID, female, a teacher in the Non-formal Educational office at MC district branch

(See more details about them as well as other interviewees of each case study in the Methodology chapter, pages 84 – 89.)

6.4 PROVENANCE IDENTIFIED FROM THE INTERVIEWS

6.4.1 Individual collections versus community archives

6.4.2 Importance of textiles

6.4.1 INDIVIDUAL COLLECTIONS VERSUS COMMUNITY ARCHIVES

Nesmith said that “...overall history of the record is the provenance of the record. Archival theory, functions and services have at their heart learning about this history, employing it and making it available to users of archives. Societal provenance infuses every aspect of it.”¹⁹⁵

Even though the main purpose behind the selection of MC Cultural Home, which was organised by an individual collector, MC SRS, was mainly to demonstrate a type of community-based heritage organisation which is commonly found in Thailand, i.e. the collection originated and maintained by an individual, the collected materials were not only those inherited by the family of the individual collector but they were also provided by members of the collector’s community. For example, in the case of MC SRS, some if not most of his collections were materials he had collected from local communities that he had visited in the past. Even though his motivation was partially driven by the need to preserve them for the next generations to learn about local history, there was also evidence of him being trusted by other community members to maintain those materials on their behalf; for instance, MC SRS saved some pieces of pottery that had been unearthed in one of the community temples in the locality believed to be the origin of the MC community. Members

¹⁹⁵ Nesmith, T. 2006. 'The concept of societal provenance and records of nineteenth-century Aboriginal-European relations in Western Canada: Implications for archival theory and practice', *Archival Science*, 6, pp.351-360

of the regional museum unit refused to keep these old pottery artefacts with the museum collections, nor were they wanted by community members as they were not perceived valuable enough to be preserved; therefore, MC SRS had rescued them and kept them with his collections.

The findings revealed that different reasons influenced his decision to collect items from his own community as well as from villages in the same district. Although it was not possible to explicitly identify MC SRS's definition of 'community' from the interview, this could be inferred by analysing the data that he provided about the history of MC town. This also implied the scope of his collection of items extended beyond the centre of MC town where he was currently residing to include other sub-communities within MC district, as denoted in the following quotation:

Once the UNESCO representatives accompanied by the Tourism Authority came to give an award for Ban Bua village temple hall. I told them that MC town did not originate at the present location. Our ancestors migrated from Nong Rue, Ban Meng village to settle at Non Ban Kao [Ban Kao hill], which is now the location of the forest temple [where the ancient pottery was unearthed], and it was found later that the location had limited opportunities for expansion; therefore, some people started moving to settle in Ban Khao village, whose name was derived from the name of the Khao tree, which grew by a brook. Some people settled in the nearby location, which is Ban Bua village nowadays, and the name came from the plentiful lotuses in a village pond [bua means lotus]. Some people moved to relocate at the present town centre, where there was an abundance of Hun plants, which became the first name of MC town, Ban Hun [an informal name of the town at present].

(MC SRS)

From the above quotation, it is possible to assume the definition of community he perceived is based on the relationships of people who share similar values and lifestyles or an ethnic community. According to his words, it can be presumed that he thought of people who lived in the villages mentioned as close relatives since they came from the same background as immigrants to this area and dispersed to live in the villages near to the original location of the town, and they had been moving around since then. Another analysis suggested that the fact

he was a direct descendent of the town's founder could have influenced him to keep as much evidence of the town's history as he could, as stated in the quotation below.

(In response to the researcher's question: Do you choose what to keep or not keep in your collections?)

I don't [have any fixed rules for that] because everything would form part of [the] history of our locality; if I don't collect them they will start to disappear through time. ...For example, before the forest temple was promoted as one of the Unseen Thailand [by the Tourism Authority], I went to see my friends and found an old temple hall of Ban Bua village temple so I took several photographs of it as well as some shots taken during the day of my friend's profession as a monk; and those photographs were used to refer to the old style of the hall once the architectural academics from KKU University came to survey temple halls and asked to see the photographs of the hall [taken] before it [had] deteriorated. [The temple hall was promoted and rewarded, as mentioned in the previous quotation.]

(MC SRS)

Likewise, after a number of years working closely with the locals, which involved regular visits to different local villages, he had become fascinated by Isan traditional textiles, especially the silk skirts. According to the interview with him, it appeared that his life had been involved with the silk textiles in different stages from childhood, as reflected by the time spent with his grandmother, to adulthood, which was driven by his experience as a judge of an Isan textile design contest and by a conversation with a famous textile collector.

Having stated that he had been involved with traditional Isan textiles at different stages of his life, his understanding of their significance was also built on the literature by Thai scholars in the field of textile studies, such as Wattana Chudhavipata in his research entitled 'Textile: reflection of Thai traditions', in which he investigated production processes and designs of woven textiles from three regions – Northern, North Eastern (Isan), and Southern Thailand. He pointed out that textiles produced in each part of Thailand are unique for materials, production processes and designs, which provide distinctive delicacy in their own styles. The distinctiveness of the woven textiles was said to be derived from the skills transferred from generation to generation and the textile creators' years of experience. Moreover, his research

also concluded that textiles play a significant role in Thai traditions that involve rituals and ceremonies from a person's birth until death.¹⁹⁶

In the interview, MC SRS revealed some interesting information relevant to community understandings of provenance. In the local villages, it was believed that an individual's possessions, including their clothes, were so associated with them that on their death they also had to be cremated. This would ensure that the deceased person would have their possessions with them when they were reincarnated. The association between a person and his/her possessions was therefore absolute – they could not be dissociated, even by death. This could be discussed as provenance since the provenance is the dead person and there is a taboo against taking their possessions, which should be burned with them.

I felt sorry that some nice fabric had to be destroyed; therefore, I started to ask the deceased's relatives for permission to have the fabric if possible, although the request was considered against the local belief of sending clothes to the dead afterlife.

(MC SRS)

The selection of textiles to be included in his collections will be further discussed in section 6.4.2 Importance of textiles, pages 166 – 171.

So far, the acquisition methods used by MC SRS to obtain items for his collections had included his personal interest in relation to rescuing the abandoned items and disobeying the local taboo regarding the deceased people's textiles. There was apparently also another approach that allowed him to conserve materials in his collections, which was gift granting.

This method was also discovered through his road trips to different villages for school outreach purposes and was also associated with the Isan culture of gratitude practices. By contrast with the taboo-breaking practices described above, here it is clear that the collections were enabled to grow through a common social practice, which needs to be recognised in order to understand both the existence and the contents of the collections.

¹⁹⁶ Chudhavipata, W. 2012. *Textile: reflection of Thai traditions* (Bangkok: Dhurakij Pundit University)

The trips were presumably for educational purposes to provide knowledge to the villagers relating to various topics and, at the end of sessions, the general Thai norm to thank a guest usually included some small gifts; therefore, MC SRS would normally be given gifts from the villagers, to show their appreciation for his visit. These gifts could consist of a variety of different articles, ranging from food to utility objects.

I was always given souvenirs such as Khid pattern pillows, silk skirts and Mud Mee pattern skirts. I was reluctant to receive them because I felt guilty as the rural families were generally living in conditions of greater hardship than my family situation. However, my father pointed out the generosity and sincerity of the villagers; therefore, he convinced me to accept their kindness by telling me that 'Whenever the villagers offer presents to someone, that means they are sincerely making the offer; thus, you should accept their generosity and find some opportunity in the future to thank them.'

(MC SRS)

The above quotation implies that MC SRS felt guilty at receiving the souvenirs from the villagers as those items were viewed as too valuable to be given away to mere acquaintances such as himself; therefore, it could be possible that his awareness of their value had prompted him to preserve them within his collections to show his gratitude to the villagers who previously owned them. According to the quotation, it is presumed that the souvenirs were local-based and handmade by the villagers themselves, which implies their unique and rare status; therefore, MC SRS might view them as valuable items to acquire and thus want to preserve them. The villagers who gave them away clearly perceived the value of giving as they sincerely offered their usual [and normally unused – researcher's note] belongings to an acquaintance to whom they felt thankful and wished to express their gratitude through their gifts of souvenirs, such as to MC SRS. This particular local norm of the Isan people, together with his father's encouragement, led him to accept the gifts and thus increase his collections of local materials.

Having discussed the methods by which items in MC SRS's collections were acquired, the interview data suggested that MC SRS had no explicit policy for appraisal and acquisition of materials other than his implicit emphasis on a geographical-based collecting of the materials from the local MC district and nearby areas. Notwithstanding the lack of an explicit

collecting policy, it is clear that the holdings fall into clearly established groupings in the collection space. Based on observation, besides a set of altar tables placed in the middle, towards the rear of the prayer room, on the left-hand side of the room were a pile of receptacles for betel nuts and a glass cabinet contained some folded silk textiles; moreover, there were some old framed photographs of figures who seemed to be selected for display due to their relationship to MC SRS and/or to MC town for different reasons, such as his ancestors, a prominent monk, the picture of Queen Sunandha Kumariratana, the wife of King Chulalongkorn (Rama V) of Siam (now Thailand), who died the year that MC town was formally established, and a beauty queen who was a native of MC town. Some photographs showed events that had happened in MC town and which were from his family's collections. The terrace of the MC Cultural Home building had a short cabinet displaying the unearthed pottery taken from the forest temple, some pillows made with local fabric and some palmleaf manuscripts. Another room had a few dummies showing the award-winning textiles he had designed. On the ground floor were the disarranged collections of old tools and equipment; and it was explained that other items were kept inside his house for safety reasons. Examples of his groupings were also partly discussed in the 'motivation' chapter since his reasons for keeping those items were not only for his own passion for antiquity but also involved the dedication to safeguard them for future generations of community members. For a variety of reasons that have been discussed here and elsewhere, it seemed that MC SRS had an agenda for his collections in his mind even though no explicit policy for his actions had ever been written down or officially represented anywhere.





Picture 19: (Above left) In the prayer room, a pile of the receptacles for betel nuts and a decorated tray for aa blessing ceremony event that had an award tag on it. It could be presumed that MC SRS had participated in making this tray and he was given it to keep for his honour, or he simply asked to keep it without having any involvement. (Above right) A small glass cabinet displaying the pottery. (Bottom) Old artefacts randomly arranged on the open-space ground floor of the building.

6.4.2 IMPORTANCE OF TEXTILES

During the interview it became clear that MC SRS was particularly engaged by the topic of textiles and his pride in this particular aspect of his collection was readily apparent.

In terms of motivation for collecting the textiles, various reasons have already been outlined in the previous section as well in the ‘motivation’ chapter. The most important aspect of the silk textiles included in his collections seemed to concern their role in representing the identity of his community. This identity aspect relates to the textiles’ cultural context, which could possibly be compared with contextual aspects of the provenance concept for archival materials.

The Western concept of provenance relates to the creation of the archival materials – by whom and for what purposes they were created and maintained as a unit.¹⁹⁷ This may include who, where, when and how the materials were created, which archivists understand as being fundamental to the meaning of the materials. MC SRS had applied a similar understanding in

¹⁹⁷ The SAA Glossary of Archival and Records Terminology published in 2005 defines ‘Provenance’ as 1) the origin or source of something; and 2) information regarding the origins, custody, and ownership of an item or collection. – Retrieved from an online version of SAA Glossary of Archival and Records Terminology at <http://www2.archivists.org/glossary/terms/p/provenance#.V7IqhvkrLIU>), 15 August 2016.

his search for background information on each piece of cloth he had received. In the interview, he pointed out that the textiles whose original owners had passed away were associated with the story that their next keeper may be disturbed by the spirits of their late owners; therefore, MC SRS's siblings did not allow him to keep the collected textiles in the house in which they all lived.

After I got those items from the villagers, my siblings [who lived with him – researcher's note] were haunted by the perception of having old items kept in the house; therefore, they didn't let me keep the items in the house so I kept them inside of the Cultural Home instead. In contrast to my siblings, I wasn't afraid of the antiques because I like them very much and I wished to know about the stories behind each item as much as I could. Nevertheless, it was not easy to clearly find out about the background of the items from the recent owners, so that sometimes I was hoping to see the original owners of those items in my dreams to clarify the stories I had heard from their successors, but that never happened. Nevertheless, I always thought of the original owners every time I had the opportunity to give alms to the monks [as the way to thank them for the items that he now owned after their decease in the Buddhism belief – researcher's note].

(MC SRS)

This quotation is revealing in a number of ways. Firstly, it shows that, despite professing disbelief in the stories of hauntings, MC SRS nevertheless retained some belief in a metaphysical association between the textile and its original owner, in his hope that he might make the link through his dreams. It is also clear that for him the textiles are very directly connected to the life stories of their original owners, which he wanted to preserve and communicate. However, he did not let the metaphysical association put him off but continued to collect the silk skirts, in which he was fascinated, and at the same time he made note of each piece of fabric he received from the family members of the deceased. Unfortunately, it was not possible to see his notes because it was not convenient for him. Nevertheless, he also used a similar practice with other items he received, for example, pottery and manuscripts, to which he added labels containing information on their background.

Regarding the labels [which are presented on some displayed items], they are for retrieving purposes because it will help me and the visitors to know the background of

the items, which may include how I got them, where I got them from, what patterns of drawing are on the pottery, and what are the titles of the palmleaf manuscripts.

(MC SRS)

Even though the items referred to in the above quotation from the interview with MC SRS are not specifically the textiles, as he is discussing his collections in general, it could be interpreted that his interest in the history of the other collected items was no different. The main idea implied in his words was that he would look for any opportunity to find out about the history of the materials he had collected. However, this attempt was not always successful, mainly due to the lack of textual records, and so it was sometimes beyond his ability to find out more, especially about the tools and equipment from the past.

Textiles, on the other hand, were more contemporary than the outdated tools, since he had collected them from their point of origin (the families). However, even though he had pointed out during the interview that the collected textiles were mainly acquired from their deceased owners' families, their history was rather ambiguous, according to the interview data.

Nevertheless, based on personal observation as an insider, being an Isan citizen, as well as general interpretation from the conversation elsewhere during the interview with MC SRS – such as once he had mentioned his childhood growing up with his grandmother and noticing her wearing the silk sarongs all her life – this wide-ranging contextual evidence can lead us to believe that the textiles he had collected represented their owners or creators – which could be the same person, since the economic constraints of Isan village families would limit the villagers' ability to buy industrial textiles to wear. As has also been referred to in the research by Chudhavipata in an earlier paragraph, Thai traditional textiles have unique designs and patterns which represent different local communities.

The patterns on the silk skirts made by the ordinary villagers and collected and studied by MC SRS were revived through being modified and blended with contemporary designs to mark the new, notable patterns on the silk fabric.

These clothes on display in this room [silk fabric display on dummies in another room] are not original, but I developed the new design and passed it to the villagers to produce based on the given design.

(MC SRS)

In relation to the provenance concept, the aforementioned process of modifying fabric patterns based on the knowledge of the traditional silk-making techniques of MC SRS's ancestors and the MC tradition in general significantly indicated the temporal aspect of provenance, which could be understood in terms of the continuum theory in the archival and records management discipline.¹⁹⁸ Although the original designs have archival value in representing the historic identity of the community, this instance could seemingly throw light on the Western concept of societal provenance in which the content and context of provenance could be added at later stages of the records by other or new creators, who also make influential changes to those records. Nevertheless, MC SRS made no explicit records of the modification he had made, except for the examples of the designs shown on the newly developed textiles themselves, which in this sense could also be considered as the temporal evidence of provenance.

It is clear that, for MC SRS, traditional textiles represent an important aspect of community heritage. However, equally important is the intangible heritage that they also embody. The development of textile patterns based on traditional designs represents a developing body of knowledge that has been transferred from generation to generation. This pattern designing of silk textiles could potentially be included in the intangible heritage of the MC community which the individual collector, MC SRS, was playing an important role to preserve and revive. In this way, his physical collections support the preservation of his community's intangible heritage in ways that make the two indivisible.

This research has shown that there is a critical lack of resources for the support of intangible heritage, despite there being regulations for safeguarding tangible heritage – such as the Act on Ancient Monuments, Antiques, Objects of Art and National Museums, BE 2504 (1961).¹⁹⁹

¹⁹⁸ The temporal aspect of provenance is related to the 'provenance can change' topic discussed on page 184, which was adapted from the suggestion by Livelton, T. 1996. *Archival theory, records, and the public* (Lanham, Maryland: Society of American Archivists and Scarecrow Press), p.139; and Nesmith, T. 2006. 'The concept of societal provenance and records of nineteenth-century Aboriginal-European relations in Western Canada: Implications for archival theory and practice', *Archival Science*, 6, pp.146 - 147

¹⁹⁹ Office of the Council of State. 1992. *Act on ancient monuments, antiques, objects of art and national museums, BE 2504 (1961), Issue 2, BE 2535 (1992)* (Bangkok: Office of the Council of State); Office of the Council of State. 2013. *Act on ancient monuments, antiques, objects of art and national museums, BE 2504 (1961) last updated BE 2556 (2013)* (Bangkok: Office of the Council of State). The first version of this act was enforced in BE 2504 (1961), amended by Act (Issue 2) in BE 2535 (1992) and last updated in BE 2556 (2013). This regulation mainly focuses on four main sections of Thai heritage: ancient remains, antiques, artefacts, and the national museum. The main substance of this act is to protect the potentially endangered national heritage, especially that dated from and beyond the Ayutthaya Kingdom period, BE 1893 - 2310 (1351 - 1767).

Since heritage activities at the community level usually engage with both tangible and intangible heritage, as indicated in the case of the MC Cultural Home in which the individual collector, MC SRS, devoted himself to the preservation of his hometown's cultural safeguarding in both aspects. For instance, there appeared to be a situation when MC SRS first promoted a temple believed to be related to history of the MC town because he considered that the unearthed pottery had community heritage value because of the belief in community origins.

It was when the old pottery was discovered in the temple and I asked permission from the abbot to keep some of the pottery pieces at the Cultural Home that led to my interest to research the history of the town. Villagers didn't want to have them because they didn't have [proper] space to keep them. Therefore, I kept them – including a pottery kiln and ancient pottery, on the latter of which I noticed the paintings were similar to those earthenware artefacts found at famous Ban Chiang, a nearby province, and they reminded me of the Isan legend, Phadaeng Nang Ai.²⁰⁰ ...They [The Fine Arts Department staff] acknowledged about the pottery discovery but they declined to keep it because their budget was limited, enabling them to support only the most priority cases of endangered heritage. These series of discovered pottery were excluded from the requirements of ancient registration records because it was assumed that the pottery was older than the existence of MC town, the establishment of which was recorded around 134 years ago.

(MC SRS)

The above quotation shows MC SRS's ambition to preserve the antiquated items despite the neglect of the relevant government agency, because he believed they were significant evidence that would provide more jigsaw pieces for the town's history. In his explanation, the folklore 'Phadaeng Nang Ai' was linked with historic places that were believed to have links with the town's origins, such as the first settlement site or the birthplaces of main characters who appeared in the folklore, as well as the myth of the giant Naga and the competition at the rocket festival or Boon Bung Fai (which survives to the present). This suggests that his knowledge and experience, which distinguished him from the ordinary villagers, enabled him

²⁰⁰ For further reading see, http://www.seasite.niu.edu/lao/laoliterature/Lao_traditional_literature/phadaeng_nang_ai.htm, retrieved 17 August 2016.

to identify the value of the pottery found at the temple. He recognised immediately that the pottery items may have been created around the same time as those found at Ban Chiang, in a nearby province, due to the similarities in the lines painted on them.²⁰¹ Moreover, he also conducted research on a contemporary basis from the archival documents as well as on the oral history told by local scholars and evidence obtained from the first governor's heirs, who were still alive and lived in the community. He was interested in and started to collect data related to the town's history for a number of decades, and he finally published a book in 2002 (it is impossible to provide full details of this book, as the researcher was not given access to it).

This practice of MC SRS signified provenance at the community level: it was commonly found that antiquities were collected not only to represent the locality but also the entire ethnicity. Therefore, the collections established by an individual collector could sometimes expand beyond his family or community and into ethnic provenance, since MC SRS defines his community more broadly than the town to which he belongs as this pottery predates the establishment of the town. The main areas of provenance concerns for the case study of MC Cultural Home were: 1) individual collections versus community archives and 2) importance of textiles.²⁰²

²⁰¹ It has been marked as a large pre-historic archaeological site in the Southeast Asia and the Mekong sub-region for the evidence of complex agricultural system especially the wet-rice farming culture. Although recent research evidence does not clearly state whether the pre-historic inhabitants were of the same ethnicity as MC district inhabitants, the culture of wet-rice farming is existing until present and modern history of Ban Chiang has shown similar settlement history between both towns since the first pioneers were believed to come from the same ethnicity in Lao PDR and migrated to escape the war during the same period in the past. Therefore, it is probably reasonable to presume that the Ban Chiang and MC inhabitants share the same ethnicity and culture based on the pre and modern historic evidence. Cited from UNESCO World Heritage List: Ban Chiang Archaeological Site (<http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/575>, accessed 18 August 2016) and Ban Chiang Sub-district Municipality: History (http://www.banchiang.go.th/default.php?modules=fckeditor&fck_id=4&view_id=55&orderby=1, retrieved 18 August 2016).

²⁰² Wurl, J. 2005. 'Ethnicity as Provenance: In Search of Values and Principles for Documenting the Immigrant Experience', 29:1, pp.65-76

CASE STUDY 2: TM COMMUNITY

6.5 INTERVIEWEES

TM PKW, male, former abbot of THA temple who was a long-term leader of TM community heritage projects before his abandonment, which was caused by disgraceful rumours about him

TM CLD, male, retired primary school teacher and community activities coordinator, TM community

TM RTN, female, primary school teacher and native to TM community

TM BHU, male, 17-year-old grandson of TM PKW who was interested in constantly engaging in heritage activities of the community

TM SOS, male, a current abbot of TM forest temple who is a master in reading palmleaf manuscripts and inventor of the 3rd month annual ceremony

(See more details about them as well as other interviewees from each case study in the Methodology chapter, pages 84 – 89.)

6.6 PROVENANCE IDENTIFIED FROM THE INTERVIEWS

6.6.1 Tangible and intangible heritage valuing

6.6.2 Physical and digital space

6.6.1 TANGIBLE AND INTANGIBLE HERITAGE VALUING

When the TM community was selected as a case study after ‘Phase One’, the initial aim was to focus on the collections of palmleaf manuscripts and out-of-date tools and equipment that the villagers used in the past and which were preserved at THA temple, the central temple for the TM community’s religious activities, since there was evidence of community engagement led by TM PKW, then the temple’s abbot. However, after entering the field, more data emerged and it was found that the community had more activities concerning cultural and traditional safeguarding in which members of the community engaged.

Intangible heritage is also represented by some traditional practices of the TM community members which had been recently revived. Those palmleaf manuscripts, which were part of the conservation project, were said to have been kept at the THA temple for a number of

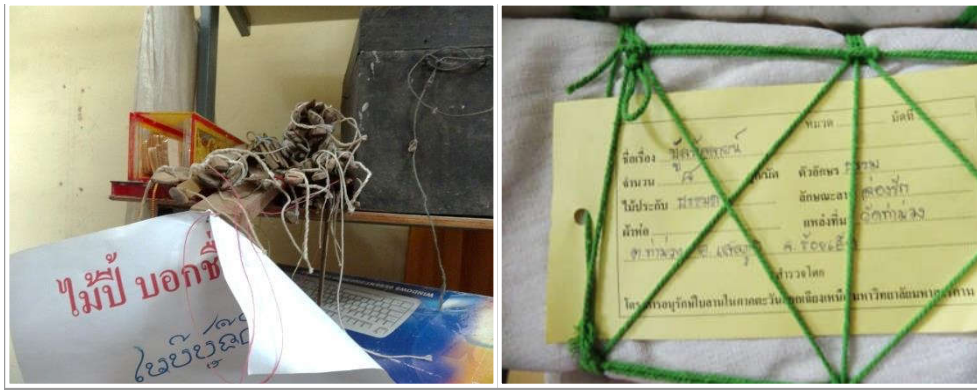
years, and they were believed to have been created by past monks and scholars from the community and been kept in the abbot's residence in the past.²⁰³ There is thus a continued connection between the original creators and the current custodians of the type so valued by Sir Hilary Jenkinson.²⁰⁴ Nevertheless, as will be described below, these holdings should not be regarded merely as an institutional archive, for the intention was to move them from the abbot's residence to the temple, which is regarded as a community space, in order to make them the focus of community learning.

Furthermore, it seemed that titles were more commonly recorded than names of the individual creators, since it appeared that the only available reference (if found in a good condition) was the tags attached to the manuscript bundles. These tags would identify the contents of each bundle, such as folklore contents, a medicine manual, and a sermon chapter. Regarding the lack of records about the creators – as they were unlikely to be worth recording compared with the titles – this could be explained by the embedded culture of storytelling, which was the norm until a group of literate monks and local scholars began to record a range of traditional stories on materials such as the palmleaf manuscripts that enabled them to preserve these stories as written records for a longer period of time. Therefore, the provenance of these palmleaf manuscripts, which contained wisdom passed down through the community as well as Isan ethnicity, became blurred as the rights over those verbal stories belong to no specific individual but to the whole TM community or the whole Isan community. This example could possibly be referred to as demonstrating ethnic provenance, similar to the textiles in the MC Cultural case mentioned earlier; and the next paragraph will demonstrate a similar context for the use of textiles to represent the community and Isan ethnicity as well.

In addition to the name tags or labels, the palmleaf manuscripts were originally wrapped with the silk or cotton textiles donated by women in the community. However, these wrapping textiles had no association with the content written in each manuscript bundle and it was impossible to trace their donors since there was no registration of their donation.

²⁰³ As has already been discussed in the chapter on 'Sustainability' pages 210 – 266 regarding the characteristics of TM community members and the strong bonds amongst individuals and relationship with temples, this assumption was based on the observational results for the community components, in which the monks were believed to be the creators of the preserved palmleaf manuscripts along with other male local scholars, as they appeared to have better access to knowledge than the female members of the community during that period.

²⁰⁴ Jenkinson, C.H., Sir. 1937. *A manual of archive administration* (London: Lund Humphries)



Picture 20: The photograph on the left shows the original tags made of wood which were tied to the manuscript bundles before they were replaced with the paper tags (shown in the photograph on the right) which included more information than the original simple titles found on the original tags. The new label, as seen in the right-hand photograph, comprised the classification number, volume number, title, the number of bundles, type of script written on the manuscripts, type of wooden cover, method of preservation used by colouring the bundle spines, identification of the wrapping textile, and the source of the manuscripts.

In terms of provenance, according to an observational analysis, the practice associated with the title tags and the processes of the palmleaf manuscripts' restoration clearly show how Thai practice differs from the best practice advocated in a Western context. Firstly, the academic team who provided the training on the restoration of the manuscripts seemed to be unaware of the concept of provenance (perhaps because they had no archival training and were more concerned with preservation).²⁰⁵ This had resulted in the removal of the original tags from the manuscript bundles and their separation from the 'fonds' of the original manuscript bundles. Moreover, because some were in a dilapidated condition, the silk wrapping textiles were also removed and kept separately from the bundles, and were replaced by plain white cloths. It is also worth noting that the original tags and wrapping textiles were completely separated from the original manuscript bundles, which shows the complete disconnection between the 'fonds' of records and their provenance (see the below illustration). There is now no means of reconnecting the texts with their original wrappings,

²⁰⁵ Historical background of the preservation of the palmleaf manuscripts could refer back to the initiative funded project of field preservation and conservation (PAC) of traditional manuscripts in Thailand which originated in the Northern region in the 1960s and presumably the idea was spread to Isan areas as well. See discussion on this project in Abhakorn, R. 1997. 'Towards a collective memory of mainland Southeast Asia field preservation of traditional manuscripts in Thailand, Laos and Myanmar', *IFLA Journal*, 23, pp.107-111. See also other relevant projects, the Digital Library of Northern Thai Manuscripts (<http://lannamanuscripts.net/en/about>), retrieved 17 October 2016, and The Database of the Fragile Palm Leaves Foundation (<http://fpl.tusita.org/about/>), retrieved 17 October 2016.

although linking them with their original labels would be possible because of the shared content. Nevertheless, no effort has been made to facilitate such a connection.



Picture 21: These photographs show: 1) the original wooden tags which were separated from the original bundles of manuscripts; 2) the moderately ruined wrapping textiles removed from the original bundles and piled together on a shelf; 3) presumably these were wrapping textiles that were still in reasonable condition, and so they were carefully sealed in plastic bags and kept in a cabinet; and 4) these individual plastic sealed textiles in 3) appeared to show evidence of registration during the revival workshop provided by the university researchers; nevertheless, the information shown on the packages included only basic facts such as the length and colour of the textiles, and the registration numbers on the inventory list.

Based on observational data, these wrapping textiles did not have a meaning associated with the bundles that they were protecting since the main purpose of the textile owners, who were female members of the community, was for spiritual and religious belief in the power of worship that making a donation would take their spirits to heaven or reincarnate them to a better life. Although the textiles' meaning might not be connected to the manuscripts', they were clearly representing the TM community in the sense of demonstrating the traditional weaving culture of community members since these textiles would have been made with the heart and soul of their creators due to their strong belief in religious sacrifice, especially in offering them as wrappings for the holy manuscripts. For this reason, the wrapping cloths were also kept together with other items at the temple. Based on observation, their classification depended on type of cloth and its condition. For instance, picture number 2 above shows cloths that were presumably made from cotton and used as the external wrapping layer, and so probably fared worse than those shown in pictures number 3 and 4, which were presumably made of silk and were probably used as the internal layers. The latter type was carefully kept in sealed plastic packages and shelved in a cabinet. In terms of archival practice, this classification manner clearly shows that the appraisal system that the

community members had selected accorded priority to materials that they thought were most valuable for the community accordingly.

Further investigation also found that not only were the wrapping textiles separated from the original ‘fonds’ of the manuscripts, their original wooden title tags were also taken away from the original bundles and were piled up together similarly to the wrapping textiles. This similar manner can confirm that the intangible heritage (content of manuscripts) is more important than the tangible heritage (title tags and wrapping textiles); that is, the knowledge recorded in the manuscripts was more important than who had written it, since these records were valuable for the entire community, not just for certain individuals in the community. That was the reason for TM PKW’s initial attempt to train community members to write and read the scripts that appeared in the manuscripts so that they could all benefit from the knowledge transferred from their ancestors, such as literature and traditional medicine recipes.

Furthermore, regarding the wrapping textiles, it was previously mentioned that they had no direct association with the manuscript identifications; however, they were donated by the female villagers because of the local belief and respect for the knowledge written in the manuscripts. Since women in the past usually had less opportunity than the men to access knowledge by attending school, most women were illiterate and remained at home to do household chores including making clothing, such as weaving the silk and cotton sarongs which they normally wore in their daily life.

After some women had finished some length of the sarong weaving and thought the textile was beautiful, they would donate some piece of that woven textile for wrapping the manuscripts. The reason for woman to offer their sarongs for this purpose came from the belief that they would go to paradise if they did so. This is because women are not allowed to be ordained in the same way as men; therefore, they can donate the sarong to wrap the manuscripts which are knowledge sources for the monks so that they will gain virtue as well.

(TM PKW)

I used to help clean the palmleaf manuscripts and wrap them with clothes. Someone used to tell me that, 'It doesn't matter whether I can read the manuscripts or not as long as I pay respect to them; then, I will be fortunate.'

(TM RTN)

Since the palmleaf manuscripts were mainly written by the monks (mainly reproductions from verbal literature), they were perceived by the general villagers as sacred materials that should be highly respected. For this reason, the offering of textiles to wrap around the manuscripts, which contain knowledge and sacred symbols of religious teaching, indicated the counterbalancing of the gender roles within Isan society which was demonstrated by the TM community's manner, even though this phenomenon had been linked with the religious belief of wellbeing in the afterlife.²⁰⁶ Since being a monk was perceived by the villagers as a moral and respectful position for men whilst the idea of female monks was not commonly accepted, monasticism usually remained a male preserve. This had resulted in the practice of women offering their textiles to wrap around a symbol of knowledge created by men in order to claim an equal stake within the same community. Thus, the prioritising of the manuscripts over their wrappers in terms of the preservation activities may have reinforced these gender divisions, valorising the 'male' contribution over the 'female'.

In addition to the palmleaf manuscript projects driven by TM PKW, there appeared to be another example, which was related to the collection of palmleaf manuscripts by a key individual of the community, TM SOS, the abbot of the TM community's forest temple. The topic to be discussed in this section is associated with that already discussed in the 'Motivation' chapter regarding the 'Spiritual Motivations' (pages 117 - 122) regarding the motivation to collect the palmleaf manuscripts not only from local territories but also from neighbouring countries such as the Lao PDR. This was due to similar religious and cultural influences especially between Isan and Lao culture – similar to the collections that MC SRS obtained from other nearby communities to represent Isan ethnicity which could relate to the concept of 'provenance of ethnicity' suggested in Western literature.²⁰⁷ As for this point, it

²⁰⁶ This is a generic assumption of practice in the Isan region based on an awareness of similar projects on palmleaf manuscripts conducted by the same university team that collaborated with the TM community, and the team usually provide training on preservation and learning of the manuscript languages. Similar practices for preservation including that related to the wrapping textiles were carried out in the same way.

²⁰⁷ Wurl, J. 2005. 'Ethnicity as Provenance: In Search of Values and Principles for Documenting the Immigrant Experience', 29:1, pp.65-76

was not clear whether TM SOS had recorded the origins of each palmleaf manuscript he had collected from different places or not.

In addition to having a fascination with Lao culture and artistic design, which he demonstrated in the ongoing temple hall by copying the design of the famous temple hall of Luang Prabang in Lao PDR, he also studied the content of the manuscripts he had obtained from both countries in order to better understand it,, for example, the preparing processes and items for worshipping the Buddha, or the 84,000 collective body of Buddha's teaching, which contained a great deal of detail and might be written differently by scholars in the different countries, although they had similar religious practices. Therefore, with the advantage offered by his fluent reading of the palmleaf manuscripts, the knowledge that he had gained from the study of manuscripts obtained from different places could enable him to achieve better understanding of the same tradition carried out by people of identical ethnicity, whose ancestors were believed to come from the same origin, and he acted as the key person in transferring this enhanced knowledge to his fellow community members.

I like to visit different temples over there and ask about their practice, such as the preparation of Boon Pha Wate, which is also practised by people over there. I would ask them questions about the worship items and make comparison with the knowledge I learned from the manuscripts and information I received from different temples over there. ... I want to improve the process of each ceremony by adding small details from information I learned from place to place. I am a good observer so I can quickly identify a new thing that I haven't seen before in other places. Some villagers used to joke with me that they don't want me to go anywhere because I will bring back more details for them to prepare for the next 3rd month ceremonial event.

(TM SOS)

The above quotation illustrates that his interest in culture in the sense of Isan ethnicity not only covers the TM community and Isan region, but also Laos, which is believed to be the original hometown of the TM people before they crossed the border to settle in Thailand. Therefore, there is the sense of a family relationship amongst the people from this region and Laos despite their geographical differences.

The analysis suggests that the processes of learning and modifying the tradition based on TM SOS's synthesising of knowledge gained from the manuscripts acquired from both countries could possibly related to the concept of 'invented tradition'.²⁰⁸ Even though the issue of over-dependency on leaders has been explored in the 'Motivation' chapter, which argued that this type of tradition may be unlikely to last after potential changes happen to the leaders and may have a critical impact on the faith of individual leaders that could have a direct effect on the continuity of the tradition or practice originated by them, this manner of knowledge integration and transferral may last longer since it had been developed and had value added to it. To the present researcher, it seems that the TM community members would remember this practice as well as who had created it because of their traditional respect for their elders. Moreover, if this 'new' tradition has become favourable amongst community members, the next successive abbot may continue with TM SOS's desire to retain the invented tradition since the ability to invent new traditions suggests a continued potency within the tradition – it remains flexible and able to adjust to new circumstances. As with the invented textile patterns, this observation resonates with continuum theory; nevertheless, further research would be required to interrogate community members' perception of the tradition and longitudinal research would be required to investigate the vitality and longevity of the new traditions.

As has already been discussed in the 'Motivation' chapter (pages 117 – 118), one example of the re-invention of the traditional Rod Naam Dhum Hua – which takes place yearly during the Thai New Year or the Song Kran Festival in the middle of April that had been reshaped from being family-based to community-based – appeared to be the adoption of formal patterns for the tradition, such as inviting the elders to gather at the same place on the day for the younger members of the community queuing to pay the elders respect and receiving blessing from them and finally give gifts to the elders to show gratitude for their attendance. It is notable that the gifts were supported by the community fund, as has been mentioned elsewhere. In terms of provenance, it is probably reasonable to refer to this practice as part of the collective memory, which is significantly associated with the intangible heritage such as oral history, performance and music, as has been discussed by scholars in the field of archival studies such as Eric Ketelaar and Jeannette Bastian. This is because this type of heritage is

²⁰⁸ Hobsbawm, E. 1983. 'Introduction: inventing traditions', in Hobsbawm, Eric and Ranger, Terence (ed.) *The invention of tradition* (Cambridge: Press Syndicate of the University of Cambridge), pp. 1-14

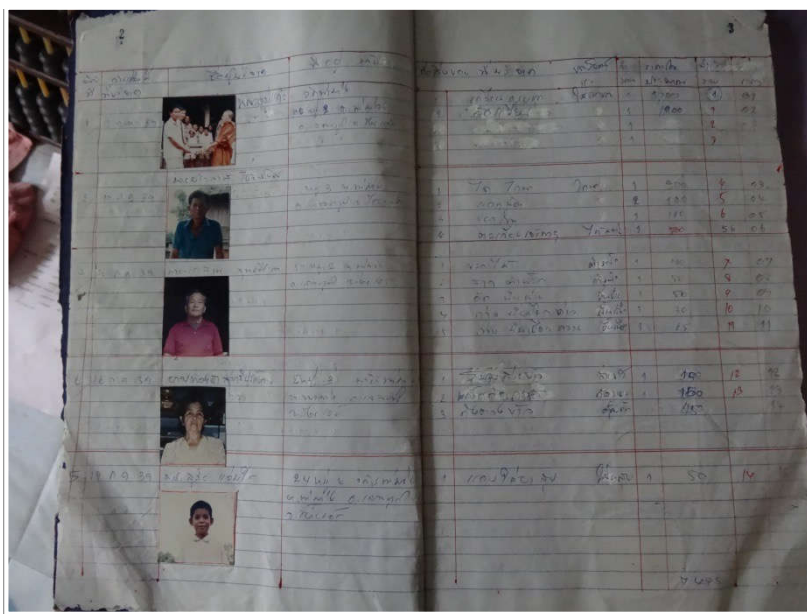
extremely meaningful for community identities, especially those communities with little or no written records of their traditional and cultural activities.²⁰⁹ The invented tradition of giving respect to community elders in the form of a formal event had been modified from the old traditional pattern of practice and moved from individual families to become a community activity, and the activity's procedures represented the dynamism of the tradition, in which it was valuable enough to be engaged with and practised from the past till the present and potentially into the future. It is clear that this practice was important for TM community members since they had been organising it every year; and this practice along with another event of the 3rd month re-invented by the forest temple abbot, TM SOS.

In addition to the above heritage activities of the palmleaf manuscript collecting and the re-invention of traditional practices, it is also necessary to mention another collection established by one of the key individuals of the TM community, TM CLD, the former primary school teacher who introduced a collection of outdated tools and equipment used by TM villagers in the past and placed it in the school before his retirement. Further details of his motivation in setting up the collection can be found in the 'Motivation' chapter (pages 123 - 124).

Regarding the area of provenance, it is noticeable that the TM villagers were willing to donate their possessions to TM CLD once he informed them that he was collecting the items by making an announcement via the village wire broadcasting. This practice clearly showed that the villagers trusted him in that they agreed to pass their unwanted artefacts to him to preserve; this occurrence demonstrates the custodial model of community-based organisation of heritage activities, as suggested by Flinn.²¹⁰ It is clear that TM CLD associated the items with their original owners, as he had made two copies of the list of donated items, the original and a copy in a larger notebook.

²⁰⁹ Bastian, J.A. 2006. 'Reading Colonial Records Through an Archival Lens: The Provenance of Place, Space and Creation', *Archival Science*, 6, pp.267-284; Bastian, J.A. 2009. 'Play mas': carnival in the archives and the archives in carnival: records and community identity in the US Virgin Islands', *Archival Science*, 9, pp.113-125; Bastian, J.A. 2013. 'The records of memory, the archives of identity: Celebrations, texts and archival sensibilities', *Archival Science*, 13, pp.121-131; Ketelaar, E. 2012. 'Cultivating archives: meanings and identities', *Archival Science*, 12, pp.19-33; Ketelaar, E. 2014. 'Archives, memories and identities', in Brown, C. (ed.) *Archives and recordkeeping: theory into practice* (London: Facet), pp. 131-170

²¹⁰ Flinn, A. 2007. 'Community Histories, Community Archives: Some Opportunities and Challenges', *Journal of the Society of Archivists*, 28, pp.151-176; Flinn, A. 2008. 'Archives and their communities: serving the people', *Comma*, 2008, pp.157-168. See further in the discussion of custodial model in Chapter 3, The Community Archives Movement, pages 53 – 55.



Picture 22: The notebook contained a list created by TM CLD of artefacts donated by TM community members, who were photographed and recorded as the donors

The list was mainly categorised by donor, who may donate several items at a time, and each donor's entry (or row) was spread over two pages. As seen in the above photograph, the columns, which covered the essential areas that TM CLD thought of including, were:

- Donor's order number,
- Date of donation,
- Donor's name,
- Donor's address,
- List of donated items,
- Description of donated items' utilities,
- Quantity of the donated items,
- Estimated monetary value of the donated items,
- Order number of each item, and
- Notes.

The above list of donated items was an important record of the provenance of the community's heritage, similar to the textiles collected by MC SRS – and similarly shows the

concept of an object as representative of a member of the community. Since the photographs of the notebook were taken from that left with the collections at the school, its details were only partly explained by TM CLD during an interview and some of the information was insufficient; for example, the Order number of the items and the Notes seemed to differ between the two versions. However, it could be assumed that the Notes represented numbers, which actually appeared on the labels of the items in the collections. Moreover, it is necessary to point out that the column Donor's name included a photograph of each of the donors, who were photographed by TM CLD; however, the photographs were sometimes of his school pupils, who were encouraged by their parents to be photographed instead of themselves. The reason for this was unclear; however, it is possible that the parents were shy or they thought that any family member could represent them; therefore, who was in the photograph was not important. Perhaps the practice suggests that, for the donors, their donations were seen as belonging to the family as a whole, rather than to any single individual, and therefore they wanted the family to be represented by the youngest member, the family's hope for its future.

Furthermore, the investigation reveals that the key individuals targeted by this research and the ordinary community members were likely to have different perceptions in appraising their heritage, in that the former had been influenced by modernity, including infrastructure and education gained from their experience living in urban areas and their experience of marginalisation (as previously discussed in the 'Motivation' chapter). The value of tangible heritage that these key individuals had perceived thus became more meaningful in terms of nostalgic relevance and identity representation of the community, whilst the majority of their community fellows did not perceive these values since they only focused on the utility aspects of the materials.

Moreover, tangible and intangible heritage appeared to have significant links with each other. From the case study of the TM community, it was notable that the tangible heritage such as antiques and palmleaf manuscripts could be sources for historical narratives (e.g. TM CLD's repeated storytelling of the TM ancestors, as discussed in the 'Motivation' chapter) and the re-invention of community norms or traditions (e.g. the annual 3rd month ceremony developed by TM SOS and the sarong wearing by TM women for formal religious events at the community temples, as previously discussed elsewhere).

6.6.2 PHYSICAL AND DIGITAL SPACE

The analysis had revealed that a social unit called community could contain different sites of ‘space’ that appeared to play important roles in community heritage engagement amongst community members. This can be demonstrated by the case of the TM community, where ‘Temple’ seemed to be the community’s prominent space, in which many activities regularly took place, including religious and ‘ordinary’ social events. The example of the Forest temple suggests that the transfer of materials to that place provides a new layer of provenance, enhancing their status as ‘community’ items, regardless of their place of origin.

As has already been mentioned elsewhere, the TM community represented a strong relationship between temple (as space), monks (as leadership symbol), and traditional activities (as community memory): these three elements appeared to significantly indicate heritage management within the community. Their example showed that the activities of heritage documentation were mainly initiated from the temple space – such as the manuscript restoring and language reviving projects led by TM PKW, individual projects regarding the palmleaf manuscripts and developing of the 3rd month ceremony led by the forest temple abbot, TM SOS, and the re-invented Rod Naam Dhum Hua. These examples indicated that local intellect and practices were created inside the temple by local scholars, mainly the monks, as they could gain access to education more than the ordinary villagers could. Moreover, the monks were generally respected within the community; thus, it may be reasonable to conclude that the records they created, such as those palmleaf manuscripts, were also regarded as sacred symbols since they were created by the religious clergy in whom the community placed strong faith.

In relation to the temple as a space for heritage management, temples generally represented the ‘community space’, which the community members were always able to approach. Therefore, this particular common space of the community members had been considered the most suitable place to represent the community’s pride and identity via the collections of local artefacts as well as historical narratives that were initially planned to be included in the community’s ‘learning centre’. The TM community’s learning centre was initially planned by TM PKW, one of the community’s key informants, and his idea was to have a local centre for the community members as well as for the visitors to the village to learn more about the community’s history.

It's been called the Centre for Cultural and Local Wisdom Learning. ... I looked for proper definition for a long time and decided on the name myself. ... If one visits the centre, I want them to gain knowledge [from the palmleaf manuscripts] because if the collections are left in there [the abbot's residence] without using them, they would be considered as worthless.

(TM PKW)

If it's completed, those palmleaf manuscripts kept in the abbot's house will be taken to the learning centre. The centre will be for educational purpose and it will contain biographies of important people of the community and whoever wants to donate any items can donate to the centre. This is the basic idea we had planned about the centre.

(TM CLD)

It was noticeable from this phenomenon demonstrated by the TM community that the heritage, which was mainly originated from the temples by individual creators such as the monks who inscribed the palmleaf manuscripts, had been perceived as belonging to the community unit rather than to the original creators. Therefore, the monks who created the manuscripts were compared to the knowledge conveyors of the local wisdom from former scholars as well as being the knowledge creators themselves once they had adapted the transmitted knowledge to be suitable for the contemporary context of the community in which they lived in. Hence, the provenance of heritage artefacts such as the palmleaf manuscripts can be flexible and adaptable to change, as Livelton suggested that “provenance can change” and this is supported by Nesmith’s argument that “...the provenance of these records, like all archival records, seems to me to be all of those people, organisations, and entities whose decisions and actions account for the records’ existence, characteristics, and continuing history, not just those which may have had the most impact on these things”.²¹¹

In summary, this section has discussed the findings relating to areas of provenance for the case study of the TM community, and these were: 1) tangible and intangible heritage valuing and 2) physical and digital space.

²¹¹ Livelton, T. 1996. *Archival theory, records, and the public* (Lanham, Maryland: Society of American Archivists and Scarecrow Press), p.139

Nesmith, T. 2006. 'The concept of societal provenance and records of nineteenth-century Aboriginal-European relations in Western Canada: Implications for archival theory and practice', *Archival Science*, 6, pp.146 - 147

CASE STUDY 3: DS COMMUNITY

6.7 INTERVIEWEES

DS CPG, male, spiritual leader of DS community

DS ABB, male, abbot of Pone Chai temple

DS GFT, female, main curator of Phi Ta Khon museum and teacher in the Non-formal Education (NFE) office

DS GIN, male, the main responsible person for making the two giant Phi Ta Khon puppets for the annual Boon Luang festival

DS SML, male, a teacher at the NFE at DS district branch who is also head of DS GFT and leader of a small group of Phi Ta Khon performers amongst other local groups

DS TAN, female, a visitor to the festival and a producer of cultural programmes hired by the Ministry of Culture

(See more details about them as well as other interviewees from each case study in the Methodology chapter, pages 84 – 89.)

6.8 PROVENANCE IDENTIFIED FROM THE INTERVIEWS

6.8.1 Tangible and intangible heritage

6.8.2 Communicating community identity

6.8.1 TANGIBLE AND INTANGIBLE HERITAGE

It was clear from ‘Phase One’ that the DS community was mainly selected based on its outstanding intangible heritage characteristic, the annual festival of Boon Luang, and Phi Ta Khon performance. Even though the intangible heritage was more noticeable from the beginning that drew more attention for the study, an analysis of data after the research fieldtrip showed that these two aspects of heritage, tangible and intangible, were significantly relevant to each other and both had a significant impact on community identity. In order to understand how ‘provenance’ might be understood within this context, therefore, it is necessary to analyse both aspects.

Based on observation, the prominent image that outsiders would have of the DS community would relate to its annual tradition and the Phi Ta Khon puppet performance, which was

similar to a carnival. The below quotation reveals the wider public interest in the festival and the thirst for more knowledge about it:

Like other people, I heard much about the Phi Ta Khon performance from the media that inspired me to know more about the Phi Ta Khon performance. I felt that the Phi Ta Khon puppets with their colourful masks were the central tourism highlight of this community since the Tourism Authority had been strongly promoting them. I was personally attracted by their colourful characters and would like to have photographs of them as well as to know more about the processes of making them.

(DS TAN)

Nevertheless, the insiders, who were community members, had a contradictory opinion in terms of the image that the outsiders perceived, feeling that it represented the community as a whole. Before a detailed discussion about these relevant issues, it is necessary to encapsulate the heritage activities practised by DS community members that were observed during the fieldtrip study. As has also been mentioned in the other analysis chapters on ‘Motivation’ and ‘Sustainability’, there appeared to be a range of heritage activities in which the community members engaged; these included procedures relating to the community’s annual festival, which consisted of many elements relating to preparation processes, and the collections in the Phi Ta Khon museum at Pone Chai temple and the private museum derived by DS CPG’s motivation. The figure below illustrates this narrative explanation of the DS community’s heritage activities.

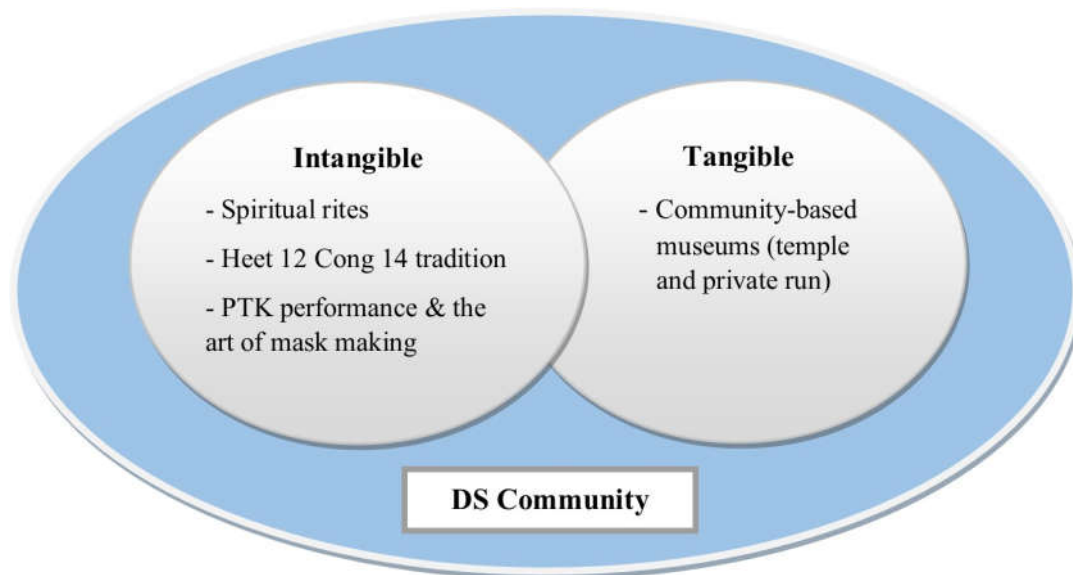


Figure 6: The top heritage activities of the DS community in brief

The above figure highlights the major heritage activities observable from the data collection. As previously mentioned, the DS community have a strong commitment to their tradition, which had been passed down from their ancestors for more than 400 years; this tradition is very much part of the community members' way of life. As for the intangible aspect, the main influential figure is the spiritual leader, DS CPG, who usually leads almost all of the community's traditional ceremonies, as these ceremonies are part of the community code of behaviour called the Heet 12 Cong 14, which marks the monthly practice throughout the year.²¹² After the community's lifestyle began to be influenced by modernity, some families might have started to ignore some of the ceremonies. However, DS CPG made an effort to preserve them and retain the monthly practice; therefore, these monthly ceremonies were partly preserved through his leadership. The findings revealed that the key figures, such as DS CPG and DS ABB, had a mutual agreement on using the core tradition Heet 12 Cong 14 to bond community members together, and the analysis showed a considerable association between this tradition's survival and the role of the community's spiritual leader. (See also 7.8.3 Leadership in the 'Sustainability' chapter pages 245 – 248.)

²¹² For further explanation on each month's description and relevance to Isan lifestyles see Wanlu, S., S. Chantachon, and B. Rachote. 2009. 'An Application of Isan Local Indigenous Knowledge in Suppression of Social Disputes', *The Social Sciences*, 4, pp.180-185; and also Kitiarsa, P. 2007. 'You May Not Believe, But Never Offend the Spirits: Spirit-Medium Cults and Popular Media in Modern Thailand', in Craig, T.J., and R. King (eds.) *Global Goes Local: Popular Culture in Asia* (Vancouver, CA: University of British Columbia Press), pp. 160-176

The above figure shows the three elements of the intangible heritage in which DS community members participate: the Spiritual rites, the Heet 12 Cong 14 tradition, and the Phi Ta Khon performance and the art of mask making. These aspects of the intangible heritage appear to be inseparable and all have a significant impact on the DS community's lifestyle. The Heet 12 Cong 14 has been part of local tradition for many years and is not only a tradition practised by a single community, but by a wide range of Isan ethnic communities. Therefore, this tradition was compared to the main stream running through the whole Isan community including the DS community, which had been blended with another community stream, the respect for ancestral spirits, which, together with the branches of the annual festival and the Phi Ta Khon performance, are the speciality of this particular community. In terms of archival concept, this complicates the concept of ethnic provenance since a set of beliefs that are common to the whole ethnicity are uniquely interwoven with specific customs of the DS community.

Therefore, it is evident that the intangible aspect of inherited traditions has played a substantial role in safeguarding the DS community's identity. Moreover, there was also clear evidence of community members' need to focus on these intangible heritage connections for the tangible method of representation, such as the exhibitions at local museums at the Pone Chai temple and DS CPG's private repository.

... I came to realise that the festival would be known for its limited number of visitors who were able to participate in the festival at the real time, but most people would not have an opportunity to learn about the festival [because they were unable] to attend the festival on the spot. I thought it would be beneficial if there was a centre for learning resources that provided information and activities [about the festival]. I was thinking of a museum; however, 'museum' in my meaning was not referring to an official institution such as at district level; I was thinking more of a temple museum. That was my initial idea.

(DS ABB)

Even though the content displayed at the Phi Ta Khon museum exhibition mainly focused on the colourful puppets, as per the tourism theme promoted by the Tourism Authority, there was evidence of a movement from community members led by DS ABB claiming that an authentic presentation of the DS community should include the Heet 12 Cong 14 tradition as

one of the highlights as well. Therefore, the provenance point is that, because the narrative and content emphasis did not derive directly from the community, the museum does not fully represent the heritage as understood by key community representatives.

In addition to the above quotation, DS ABB further reported the future plan for improvement of the museum content, as quoted below:

Yes, it may not possible to collect all relevant photographs for that particular year but I will know by heart what is missing as I am a local of this community; therefore, I would tell them to collect more photographs for the missing parts to make it ultimately complete. After we have all the photographs, the next step is for them to be reviewed by the older people.

(DS ABB)

It is notable that this quotation does not relate to the existing displays but to the ongoing self-documentation process. This has emphasised that it is important to community locals that they are able to tell the full story, that wider community participation is needed and that the older members of the community better understand the way the community's heritage should be represented.

Another DS community museum was DS CPG's 'Cultural Hall for DS Locality and Tradition'. It was observed that the content and tradition contains two main areas: the exhibition of content regarding the Heet 12 Cong 14, or the DS community's core 12-month ceremonies/practices, and the collective awards of honour that DS CPG had received, especially those to celebrate his honorary Doctorate, received from the local university, where his collaborative university researcher, RTNA, was affiliated. DS CPG explained about the selected content in his museum:

Yes...it is from the real practices that I've been doing, so the Phi Ta Khon and the 12-month ceremonies have been highlighted here.

(DS CPG)

Having compared these two local museums, which are located within the same community yet with totally different backgrounds, the findings show that external bodies could have a

significant effect on decision making regarding the community's archival content due to relevant factors, e.g. a funding body for the project that could substantially direct the content for a specific purpose, such as to attract tourists instead of promoting what the community saw as its core tradition and the ownership of community space – as in the case of Pone Chai Temple for the Phi Ta Khon museum. Nevertheless, in order to understand the provenance of the community archives, or the collections presented at the Pone Chai Temple in this sense, it is important to include the government funding and influence on the museum content as part of the community's archival provenance. The museum thus can be identified as having 'parallel provenances' – those of the community representatives and of the funding body responsible for interpreting the community's heritage. The situation also suggests that provenance is not merely a matter of the origin of the heritage but also the identity of its interpreters. In both museums, the display derives from the DS community – without their traditions, there would be no content. Both are now in some senses community owned. However, because the interpretation of this heritage in the Phi Ta Khon museum has been undertaken by individuals not recognised as community members, the content is felt to be less representative of the community by the community itself.

I think that there will be a meeting in the future with various stakeholders regarding the content to ensure that it is provided by DS locals, since last time it was entirely managed by the provincial government. ... They usually made excuses that there were problems with contract, commitment or any other things. Thus, I had to follow their plan first. ...

(DS ABB)

In contrast to the Phi Ta Khon museum, the private museum of DS CPG, the DS community's spiritual leader, was derived from the key individual's motivation that he was willing to educate local and public visitors about his traditional roles, which were generally involved with DS tradition and culture. Therefore, his museum was founded based on his volunteering mindset and personal funding together with the support from an academic researcher who also supported it with the one-off funding from her research fund. (See also his motivation, pages 136 and 140.) The focus point was that he was free from pressures from external funding bodies that may have different aims to preserving the traditions that he wanted to promote. Moreover, decisions about the museum and its contents were not even

personal to him: as discussed earlier, according to DS CPG, all were inspired and approved by the royal spirits of the DS community, which were beyond his personal judgement.

6.8.2 COMMUNICATING COMMUNITY IDENTITY

The previous section has discussed identity in relation to the connection of tangible and intangible heritage within the context of community museums. In relation to the same topic of identity, this section will specifically focus on one area of DS community traditions that represents the community to the public domain more than other traditional components: that is the Phi Ta Khon puppets.

During the data collection, some interviewees – who were also DS community members who had been born and grew up in their hometown – raised concern about the Phi Ta Khon puppets, which they considered as folklore inherited from their ancestors; thus, representing their community identity. These people have nevertheless seen changes through time in elements of their community's traditional events, especially the annual Boon Luang and Phi Ta Khon. For instance, DS GFT had reported her concern about the representation of the Phi Ta Khon model, which she felt could be misrepresented to outsiders for commercial reasons. She pointed out that the DS community's identity in relation to its Phi Ta Khon features had been threatened by economic pressure, and that she felt this unique feature of the DS community should be protected or at least accurate stories about the Phi Ta Khon features should always be presented to outsiders so that the DS community's tradition would be perceived correctly and maintain its unique original aspects.

...Regarding our Phi Ta Khon features which could be found everywhere to promote tourism, I'm more concerned about the communication of our Phi Ta Khon features by the outsiders, whose aim may only be [to make] profits from selling our community's trademark but may lack accurate communication about its context. For example, the district of CK has their own puppet feature called Phi Khon Naam, which is similar to our Phi Ta Khon, but souvenirs related to Phi Ta Khon are also available for sale in CK district, making it too convenient for the tourists [in] that they don't have to visit our community to buy locally made souvenirs. Another district displays [a] Phi Ta Khon model for tourists to have photographs taken with; and again these tourists would never have to come to our district to experience its origin because they could access our traditional trademark of Phi Ta Khon everywhere.

...Personally, I don't think it's the right way to appreciate the culture since tourists should make an effort to visit the origin of cultural uniqueness. Having said that, I am aware of marketing factors which drive widespread promotion of culture in specific areas because tradition would be less known without marketing promotion. People have different opinions and so do I.

(DS GFT)

From the above quotation, it was clear that DS GFT felt ownership towards the Phi Ta Khon puppets as a feature that represented her community and she was fully aware of the economic driver causing its cultural imitation by other communities. Nevertheless, she appealed for accreditation once the Phi Ta Khon feature had been presented anywhere outside of her community so that whoever came across it would learn about its origin and the reason for its existence within the DS community. Here can be seen a recognition that authenticity is related to provenance: without explicit recognition of the true provenance of the Phi Ta Khon puppets as understood by their originating community, the use of this heritage would be inauthentic. At the end of the above quotation, her tone of voice implied that this issue of identity duplication was beyond her ability to solve as an individual and cooperative actions from locals and the government sector were needed for its resolution as the Phi Ta Khon feature was also being promoted as part of the national heritage rather than as that of the DS community.

Similar to the point of view raised by DS GFT, another interviewee, DS SML – who was a member of the DS community and had been engaging in the production processes and playing the puppet himself every year – had shared the same example of the particular community within the same province that used the Phi Ta Khon to promote tourism in its district without giving enough credit to the origin of the puppetry. This situation shows that members of the DS community did felt uneasy about their community's identity being misrepresented and that they were starting to lose control of their heritage ownership.

Whilst communicating the authenticity of the Phi Ta Khon feature as the representative heritage of the community appeared to be significant as an issue raised by the interviewees, other aspect of the puppets – for example, the making of masks and costumes for the puppets as well as the performance techniques – seemed less problematic to DS SML since these were seen as practical issues, the resolution of which the next generations could learn from

the adults, as has already been mentioned in the previous chapter. In addition to the inherited practice of mask making, it was found that the patterns of the masks changed across time. According to the informal and formal interviews as well as observation data, it was understood that the original Phi Ta Khon masks and costumes were very plain, with black and white colouring only, and no painting was needed as their ultimate purpose was for worshipping the royal spirits and they were then thrown into the Muhn River that runs through the community, in order for the flowing river to take away any bad luck.



Picture 23: (Left) Old photograph of the Phi Ta Khon exhibited in the PTK museum showing the plainer masks, in comparison with the more recent one, full of decoration and colours (Right).

According to an interview with DS SML, it was understood that the Phi Ta Khon patterns were fairly freely applied by any producers.

The design of Phi Ta Khon has no specific rule to follow. Anyone is free to be creative about the patterns they use to decorate their masks.

(DS SML)

Nevertheless, after the Phi Ta Khon was overwhelmingly promoted by the government sector, the community members had adapted to the changes, especially to satisfy the tourists who particularly came to enjoy the colourful carnival of the Phi Ta Khon; therefore, they started to apply more colours to the masks and costumes. One important reason for doing so was driven by the economic benefits gained from selling the masks (there is no evidence of

the popularity of buying costumes other than the masks) to the tourists, especially foreigners, as they preferred the colourful ones over the plain ones.

Since I grew up with the Phi Ta Khon, I know what patterns are more appreciated by the foreigners. They don't like black and white tones or sharp drawing with arching lines, but I notice that the bestselling masks are usually the colourful ones.

(DS SML)

The above quotation shows an invented traditional aspect of the patterns and design of Phi Ta Khon figures, since they were very flexible and adaptable to change as long as the change derived from and was controlled by the community, even if it was commercial.²¹³ In terms of provenance, even though interviewees such as DS GFT had raised concerns about the identity of the Phi Ta Khon feature gradually being threatened by misrepresentation from outsiders, as has been discussed earlier in this section, they confirmed that the patterns and design were distinguishable by the DS locals.

Supposed someone had bought [an unpainted] PTK mask and coloured or drawn the pattern on it, which is possible, but my sense can tell the difference from those originally made by the locals here.

(DS GFT)

Having provided two different examples of identity concerns raised by members of the DS community, the findings show that this is a complicated issue that community members – especially from different age groups – should work on collaboratively to identify what, why and how heritage could be documented and learned about together, to communicate their community's identity both within and outside of the community.

To summarise, this section has discussed provenance in the DS community, comprising issues related to: 1) tangible and intangible heritage and 2) communicating community identity.

²¹³ See Hobsbawm, E. 1983. 'Introduction: inventing traditions', in Hobsbawm, Eric and Ranger, Terence (ed.) *The invention of tradition* (Cambridge: Press Syndicate of the University of Cambridge), pp. 1-14 for "invented tradition".

CASE STUDY 4: GAL

6.9 INTERVIEWEES

GAL MON, female, co-founder of GAL

GAL NBA, male, a monk who used to participate in GAL's mobile exhibition on the temple theme and donated some photographs to the GAL collection

GAL NUI, male, an ex-committee member of the SR provincial cultural association

GAL SOM, male, a retired government officer who lived in the city of SR

GAL DSW, female, the owner of a small home-stay hotel in SR city centre

(See more details about them as well as other interviewees from each case study in the Methodology chapter, pages 84 – 89.)

6.10 PROVENANCE IDENTIFIED FROM THE INTERVIEWS

6.10.1 Collection policies and custody

6.10.2 Collection that represents marginalised communities

6.10.1 COLLECTION POLICIES AND CUSTODY

The management team of GAL led by GAL MON and her colleague, GAL JIB, called the organisation a gallery, which occasionally confused some people who were attracted by its name and misunderstood about its functions, as they often associated it with a photography shop. Nevertheless, the name of GAL appeared to have been intentionally chosen to be different from other cultural organisations such as the local museums since the collection content had been already identified at the beginning of its establishment. According to GAL MON, the key informant of this research case study, historical photographs were the main materials that GAL would preserve. Even though some materials were sometimes offered by locals due to their trust in the organisation, the GAL team had to gently decline such materials and instead referred the locals to specialist organisations such as the national museum or Buddhist university for old artefacts and palmleaf manuscripts respectively.

...Some artefacts were given to the museum because they were antiquated items but we don't have knowledge about preserving them. These items often included pottery such as bowls, pots, and jars. ...If we keep these items, we have to care for them,

whilst GAL isn't a suitable place to keep them because the general temperature of this building is too warm and we don't have knowledge of preservation; for example, someone had offered palmleaf manuscripts to us and we had advised them to go to the monk school instead since there was a room in which to keep manuscripts over there. We have made this quite clear because we can't look after everything ourselves.

(GAL MON)

Despite having a clear practical policy on the preferred materials for their collections, there were apparently no written regulations of their practice since it was only a small organisation and the entire team consisted of only three people, who had absolute decision making regarding the content of GAL collections, with interference by other stakeholders (initial contractual partners including funding body and GAL building owner) being unlikely. For this reason, occasionally exceptional materials had to be kept at the GAL based on conditions of trust from local communities of which the members had mutually agreed for GAL to be a custody for their items. This situation could be exemplified by the case of the local Chinese community who looked after the city pillar shrine and who wanted the GAL team to keep the shrine's old name plate after it was removed and replaced by a new one. They did not trust any individuals to do this as they believed that individuals might seek to benefit from it whereas GAL was believed to be a moral organisation that would not take advantage of their community's possessions. Therefore, the members of the Chinese community had asked if they could leave the name plate with GAL and the GAL team had accepted and it was retained in the GAL building.

For example, the old name plate of the city pillar shrine, which was taken down, was brought to keep here. Many people were interested in keeping it, but [the committee] insisted that it be kept at GAL. ... The committee of the city pillar shrine thought that GAL is the hope for the locality in terms of preserving intellectuals; therefore, they thought that it is the most suitable place to keep the name plate as it will be safer than other places, especially as they could be assured that the GAL would not sell it for its own benefits.

(GAL MON)

This and the attempted donation of other heritage materials demonstrates that the local community identifies the GAL as the appropriate repository for their heritage, and the

Chinese donation shows that this trust extends to communities of different ethnic origin from the majority.

In addition to the GAL team's main reason for preferring to collect photographs due to the limitations relating to storage space and their focus of knowledge transferring, another reason that appeared to be a most important factor for the practice related to their enthusiasm for local history and their motivation to create historical narratives for the marginalised communities, as has been partly discussed elsewhere. The photographs' main purpose was to act as a tool for their historical research and it seemed that the gallery was the by-product through which to deliver their research results in the hope of having an impact on the mainstream society and making the voices of the marginalised communities heard.

We are rather keen on the knowledge-distributing aspect. Most original photographs aren't kept here because of the high temperature which could deteriorate their condition. ...I keep them in boxes, bags or envelopes inside of a cabinet in a store at my house and they are classified by names of the donors.

(GAL MON)

Moreover, in terms of photograph collections, it was worth mentioning that the photographs kept in the collections could be both originals and/or copies of them. The copies were such as those retrieved from primary or secondary resources, e.g. archival documents from the national archives. This flexibility of the evidence records they chose to select reflected the aim of the organisation, as already mentioned above, which was to use the photographs as tools for historical research, which mainly focused on an oral historical approach. Thus, the persons appearing in the photographs would be contacted and they would tell stories from their memories on the topics in which the GAL team was interested in conducting research on. In this way the original archival provenance of the materials had less relevance than their activist function, making this collection rather similar to the activist community archives described by Flinn and Gilliland.²¹⁴

²¹⁴ Flinn, A. 2008. 'Archives and their communities: serving the people', *Comma*, 2008, p.162; Gilliland, A.J. [2012]. *Voice, Identity, Activism (VIA): a community-centric framework for approaching archives and recordkeeping*

It was also reported that original photographs given by the donors were generally returned to the original owners as the GAL team only kept the copies of them on computer. It was said that only a few donors had totally given the photographs to GAL.

Most of them [photographs] are returned to the owners. There are only a few photographs that are given away by the owners.

(GAL MON)

In addition to the above quotation, GAL MON also reported elsewhere during the interview that it was generally known that the GAL organisation was allowed to use the donated photographs as long as they were carefully treated. This agreement was clearly based on verbal and emotional trust between the photograph donors and the GAL team. Since the agreement was informally constituted due to the lack of organisational experience from both parties, there was a lack of relevant policies in place, such as relating to borrowing, which later led to critical issues of copyright, showing how, even with collections in which provenance is conceived in community terms, traditional aspects of ownership need to be taken into account. (See the quotation in the ‘Sustainability’ chapter, page 257.) The situation in which a researcher claimed authorship of an interview based on a photograph in the GAL collections could be seen as a critical issue relating to plagiarism in an academic domain; nevertheless, this situation could also inform us about the custodial rights, in which the donors retained their rights over the donated photographs. This indicated that the communities, represented by the individual donors, could play significant roles in controlling the ways in which their identities were represented and who were representing them; for instance, GAL was more reliable than researchers from formal established institutions such as the local universities.



Picture 24: The interior of GAL, the main purpose of which was to exhibit photographic collections that the GAL team had selected to present to the visitors. The original photographs were kept at GAL MON's house for security reasons and because of its more suitable preservative conditions, since the GAL was affected by high temperatures caused by the sun most of the time.

Furthermore, in terms of photograph storage, it was reported that the photographs were mainly given to the organisation as printed copies. The GAL staff, GAL PHN – the administrative staff member – or GAL MON, would scan them in order to preserve them in digital file format and return the photographs to the donors if required. The GAL staff preferred storing the photographs in digital format due to the organisation's limited storage space. It is necessary to note that the original printed photographs were kept in cabinets at GAL MON's house whilst only those selected for framing were displayed at the gallery, since the gallery space was not an ideal place for keeping the original copies of the photographs because of high temperatures and security reasons.

[Yes, we] scanned those photographs. The scanner was recently broken as well as the external hard disk, which left us to re-scan those photographs.

(GAL MON)

Although digital files were preferred to printed ones, to get access to both formats of photographs was requested only due to the lesson learned from the copyright issues. This happened due to the GAL team's lack of experience, which meant that they did not plan the

recordkeeping of their organisational processes. Therefore, as a consequence of the complaint received from the donor of that photograph together with advice from other mainstream organisations, the GAL staff began to record requests made by researchers or visitors to borrow materials or other of the gallery's services.

The staff had learned from other more formal organisations and had adapted similar practices in their organisation. Moreover, the custodial issues were also hidden in this illustrated quotation in that custody rights for the photographs seemed to remain with the donors; nevertheless, the GAL staff held discretion over the photographs as long as they could demonstrate transparency of usage to the photograph donors. This practice was solely based on 'trust' given by the donors to the GAL staff; and this trust was developed through the strong relationship between GAL staff and the donors, who were normally members of communities that GAL staff had known through the friendship initiated by the father of GAL JIB, co-founder of GAL with GAL MON, via his fieldwork career that allowed him to meet and keep in touch with the locals.

6.10.2 COLLECTIONS THAT REPRESENT MARGINALISED COMMUNITIES

In addition to the discussion in the previous section regarding the implications of appraisal policies and the form of custody applied by GAL, this section is part of the appraisal yet is more focused on the collections in terms of the preference for photographs or materials to be included in its collections.

The discussion in this section is greatly related to the motivational issues already discussed in the 'Motivation' chapter (pages 143 – 150), since the means of selecting materials to be included in the collection was driven by the background that motivated the organisation to exist especially from the point of view of the GAL staff member who was both an activist and a historian.

The analysis reveals that an understanding of 'marginalisation' was apparently fundamental to the organisation's establishment as part of the founders' desire to collect and disseminate knowledge on locality for the communities of SR province. For this reason, the research topics that the team would like to investigate would normally be determined in advance; these were mostly related to local lifestyles of communities that had not been mentioned very much in the mainstream media or publications, such as groups of traditional artisans, e.g.

silversmith and textile weavers, as well as traditional musical bands and dancing which were gradually being forgotten by younger generations, based on observational data learned from publications provided by GAL staff.

Moreover, the research approach applied by the GAL team was always a qualitative anthropological method, which was time consuming, yet their preference was to ensure that the researched communities would not feel exploited by their projects; for example, the case of silverware making already mentioned in the ‘Motivation’ chapter (pages 148 – 149). Based on an informal interview with the GAL team, it was found that all three of the organisation’s staff members could be considered locals in the SR society as they had been living in the province for a long time and could speak local dialects including Isan and Khmer, which were spoken by the majority of the SR population. Even though the administrative staff member, GAL PHN, was originally from the central region of Thailand, she had been living in SR province for a number of years and had been constantly engaging with local communities and was able to speak the Khmer dialect as well. Therefore, this ability of the GAL staff appeared to help them to conduct their anthropological research with local communities without difficulty.

Therefore, from the contextual description given above, it could be understood that GAL staff always had a clear idea of the kind of collections that the organisation wanted to represent, which focused on marginalised groups of people and their endangered heritage, such as performance and handcrafting skills, and intended to ensure that their communities were represented by means of their members not by the mainstream discourses. Moreover, their materials, which in this context refers to the photographs which were the organisation’s main collections, were firstly accumulatively collected based on their research interests; then they went on field trips to meet people who appeared in the photographs for more in-depth data collection. As a consequence of their practices, their collections had been growing after the GAL staff had gained ‘trust’ from members of the communities with which they had spent time during their field research, and the villagers began to donate or lend their photographs to the team for their research and in order for them to be kept in the GAL collections.

As mentioned before, the main aim of the GAL team was to avoid the exploitation of communities via their research; they maintained as strong a relationship with the communities as they could. For instance, in the case of conducting research with the

silversmith community, the method applied by the team included buying silver for the silversmith to demonstrate the processes involved in making the silverware whilst the team documented them and conducted an interview. After completion of the project, the team left the item of silverware discussed with the silversmith for others to appreciate and study it in the future. The GAL team claimed such practices distinguished them from other researchers who used to approach the same community for a similar kind of research, and that the community preferred the GAL team's method, according to the interview with GAL MON. This incident not only showed that the GAL team was fully aware of concerns relating to heritage ownership, but it also implies the inseparable relationship of tangible (the silverware) and intangible (provenance of the silverware, i.e. the silversmith, community context, silverware designs and inherited local knowledge of silverware making) heritage that the GAL researchers were taking into account as a whole process, and which should belong to the community not the funding or researching organisations.

Later when I passed the [silverware-making] village, I made a short visit to the villagers and I had to stay for a dinner with them before I could leave. I am like their young relative now and I am always happy to see them.

(GAL PHN)

This situation had implied some degree of connection between the organisation and the communities, despite the argument elsewhere that the GAL was rather a formally established organisation and that it was separated from the communities. This quotation clearly shows that members of communities had accepted and embraced the GAL staff into their communities; therefore, it could be assumed that the GAL organisation was representing the communities with which they had worked.

In relation to this assumption, GAL MON had shared her thoughts about how she defined 'community' for the city of SR where she and her team had been conducting a substantial amount of research.

Actually, [the term 'choom chon' or 'community'] it's very large [in size]; however, we focus on the nearby areas that we have [a personal] connection with as well as the areas of interest that we really want to do research about. We may cross the border to our neighbouring country to find out the answers for our research or sometimes we

may have more research questions in return for further study. It [a community] is about cultural area not about geographical governing area. Actually, SR city in terms of historical context is the cultural area that [the definition of community] would cover beyond the national borders since both countries [Cambodia and Thailand] have a long history of relationship in cultural and governmental domains.

(GAL MON)

Her definition of ‘community’ from the above quotation clearly shares a similar approach with ‘ethnic provenance’ as discussed in other case studies such as MC SRS of MC Cultural Home and TM SOS of the TM community, a definition which transcends the political boundaries associated with governmental archives. This domain of research interest in community research was driven by the GAL researchers’ background of working in the NGOs, as has been previously mentioned, including years of experience publishing stories about the minorities, focusing on the south of Isan area which sometimes included those across the borders of Thailand and Cambodia.

Moreover, whilst being asked to select a suitable term from the list provided by the researcher, GAL MON had chosen the term ‘community archive’, as she made a comparison to the work of GAL in that:

Its main focus is to document knowledge and communicate it to others so that they are informed about what, where and when the situations have happened. ...The definition of ‘community archive’ that I perceive is concerning with telling people based on what we have found from our research in the areas of our interest such as in SR province about what situations have happened, when and where.

(GAL MON)

According to her statement about the definition of community archive based on her understanding, a couple of points appear to have emerged from her answer:

- 1) the work of GAL had taken a step further from curatorial staff for the collections to knowledge creator and transmitter, which involved substantial research on historical topics derived from communities within SR cultural areas; and
- 2) it is implied that the GAL team felt the lack of knowledge documentation and communication within the SR cultural area that had been made available by any

related organisations including the government section and that there was a need to take action as the representative of the communities they had researched.

All in all, the analysis in this section reveals that the idea of ‘marginalisation’ has underpinned the GAL team’s motivation; thus, this has influenced the means of their collections, including appraisal and ethnic provenance.

To summarise this section, the findings revealed that provenance related to the GAL case study concerned: 1) collection policies and custody and 2) collections that represent marginalised communities.

6.11 CONCLUSION

Issues around ‘provenance’ have been discussed within this chapter and each case study demonstrates its own means of dealing with its collections. It is also notable that ‘motivation’ for having the collections or preserving the traditions demonstrated by members of the studied communities could significantly influence and direct the collective means of community heritage. The table below shows the areas of provenance that were discussed in this chapter.

Table 2: Provenance aspects from all case studies

Case study	Themes
MC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Individual collections versus community archives • Importance of textiles
TM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tangible and intangible heritage valuing • Physical and digital space
DS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spiritual duty • Spiritual benefits • Communication of traditions to younger generations • Communication of traditions to outsiders • Reaction against external involvement
GAL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collection policies and custody • Collections that represent marginalised communities

The first case study, MC Cultural Home, owned by a private collector, MC SRS, revealed the accrual of his collections including his personal fascination for antiquities, disregarding of some local taboos, and acquisition of gifts or souvenirs from villagers as part of the norm of showing gratitude to visitors. In the case of MC SRS, the analysis shows that the concept of ethnic provenance seemed relevant to these research findings since his collections had grown from the materials received from not only the community to which he belonged but also covered the nearby communities where the people also shared the same culture of Isan ethnicity. Moreover, in this case, traditional woven textiles were shown to have a significant role in representing the Isan identity, similar to other materials he had received as part of the villagers' gratitude. However, it appeared that MC SRS had used textiles, which could be considered as the tangible heritage, to preserve the intangible heritage of the Isan identity through further development of designs on the textiles based on the traditional ones.

The second case study, TM community, reveals a similar situation to MC Cultural Home regarding the intertwining of tangible and intangible heritage. As discussed in the chapter, this could be exemplified by the project led by the ex-abbot, TM PKW, about the restoration of the palmleaf manuscripts. The findings show the way in which the name tags and cloth wrappers were separated from the manuscripts during their restoration could be interpreted as content (knowledge written in the manuscripts) is more important than the relationship between the bundles and their finding aids (name tags) and protection (wrapping cloths). However, textiles used as the wrapping cloths were important in one way – in that they clearly represented the community's identity since they were devotedly made by female members of the community for use as a protective layer for the manuscripts. This related to the women's belief that good deeds brought good consequences; therefore, it was believed that they would hand make these textiles with heart and soul. An analysis suggests that all these elements of self-documenting processes should be seen as an integral whole, as part of a fonds, and should be able to be re-integrated intellectually if not physically; therefore, the Thai practices are closer to Western archives in prioritising textual materials and those created by the more powerful.

TM CLD of the TM community also collected the unused tools and equipment from his community fellows. These materials represented traditional lifestyles of the community.

Moreover, TM SOS of the TM community also demonstrated a manner similar to MC SRS in terms of collecting materials that represented Isan ethnicity, which corresponded with the concept of ‘ethnic provenance’. The collected manuscripts were used to transfer local beliefs and knowledge as well as to create new traditions which received support from the community members. The analysis also implied that this practice could potential lead to disputes over ownership if other communities wanted their property returned to them.

At the village level, such as in the TM community, the study shows that physical space remained the preference over digital space – especially space at temples where most activities, religious and generic, normally took place – whilst the digital space was limited due to lack of infrastructure and technical skills.

Next, looking at the DS community, the analysis reveals similarities shared with the two previous case studies, MC Cultural Home and TM community, regarding the significance of tangible and intangible heritage: that the relationship between both domains even confirms their strong and unified bonds to ensure the community identity is safeguarded, which has already been demonstrated in the diagram in Figure 6: The top heritage activities of the DS community in brief (page 187) and its relevant discussion. Moreover, the key community leaders’ influence has been shown to be significantly involved with the intangible aspect of community heritage, which is unfixed, as part of the cultural characteristics that are able to be manipulated by humans through time. Therefore, community heritage documentation presented in the case studies has shown this aspect of mobility and adaptability.

Furthermore, the case study of the DS community also reminded us about lessons learned to involve all a heritage project’s stakeholders at the initial stage to ensure that the content selected to communicate to the world is truly representing the community identity by means of the community members themselves. Moreover, in association with the issue of gradual identity loss, there was evidence that DS community members had felt the need for urgent action to occur so that their identity, including their intellectual rights, would be protected. The example given was the Phi Ta Khon feature, which should remain the symbol of the DS community rather than becoming a symbol for the entire province due to the biased tourism promotion by the local government.

There was evidence for the extent to which the last case study, GAL, was different from the others in terms of its background of establishment, as it was more formally founded as an organisation aiming to represent the marginalised communities within SR province, whereas the other case studies had key individuals that actually lived in the communities and their projects were situated within their own communities. Even though GAL's background of establishment was bureaucratically related, the findings argued that the close relationship between the GAL staff and the communities had led the GAL staff to a position that could be called membership of the communities with which they had been in contact. This was due to the anthropological approach adopted in their research, which allowed the team to gain trust from community members and have custody of their photographs and represent the community's identity on their behalf, which is another means for identity communication that was agreed by the community members and the GAL team.

In terms of guidance and policies, the staff of GAL had a very casual working style in which they did not establish any organisational regulations, policies or guidance from the foundation, leading them to encounter a number of challenges, including a copyright issue through which they had learned lessons from the incidence of photograph misuse. Therefore, they started to observe other mainstream organisations and learned to keep evidence of the service requests to ensure transparency and accountability with the photograph donors. In relation to this noted copyright lesson learned, the same evidence also brings the understanding of the custodial model between the GAL and communities to light; that is, the custody of the donated photographs is likely to remain in the ownership of the donors whilst the GAL staff had also been given authority by the donors, based on their trust for the staff, to manage their photographs in an ethical manner.

Finally, the concept of 'ethnic provenance' became apparently unconsciously adapted by key individuals from all the case studies when they came to the term for selection of the materials or themes to be included in repository for which they were responsible or in the community's cultural space. The study also shows that, by unconsciously adapting the concept of 'ethnic provenance', the key individuals of the communities had gained more opportunity to preserve both tangible and intangible heritage, both of which are significantly related to and support one another to potentially provide an element of sustainable community-based heritage projects in the future.

To sum up, in terms of provenance, it is clear that ‘ethnic provenance’ became the unconscious shared practice adopted by key individuals of all case studies. Moreover, the findings show that the individuals’ perception of their practice is significantly influenced by motive factors already discussed in the previous chapter.

Having adopted the ‘ethnic provenance’, this practice consequently allows community archives in a Thai context a noteworthy intertwining of tangible and intangible heritage in which separation of the two aspects in terms of consideration of provenance would make no sense. This is because both aspects are fulfilling one another, such as the recognisable example of Isan textiles discussed in the cases of TM and MC. Moreover, the findings also suggest that the key leaders from the MC, TM and DS case studies play an important role in intangible heritage in demonstration of its mobility and adaptability in relation to the tangible heritage (textiles, palmleaf manuscripts, and ceremonies). Even though ‘ethnic provenance’ seems to be useful for the Thai communities to safeguard their heritage, the findings also imply the risk to intellectual rights if owners of the items collected by the key individuals happen to ask for the items back in the future, since their original sources did not appear to be systematically and consistently recorded for long-term use.

In addition to the ‘ethnic provenance’, which is the unconscious manner used to safeguard the Isan identities applied by key individuals from all case studies, the findings also indicate that the sub-groups’ identities are no less significant, and sometimes could be abused or misrepresented by the more powerful group or the outsiders if participation of all stakeholders – especially members of such communities – does not occur in the processes of heritage documentation, such as the example of the PTK museum at DS community.

In relation to the above discussion regarding ‘ethnic provenance’ and participation of all stakeholders in the processes of a community’s heritage documentation, the findings reveal that ‘trust’ is also an essential element to maintain Thai heritage, as has been presented in all case studies throughout the chapter. Particularly, the case of GAL has well demonstrated a high level of trust for the organisation: while the GAL team’s working space is situated outside of the represented communities, it solely manages the photograph collections abide by ethical agreement between the GAL team and photographs’ owners, who are members of the communities.

Lastly, in respect of preserving their heritage, Thai communities prefer physical space over digital space, as it seems that support for a digital infrastructure is not yet in place.

The next chapter will focus on the findings concerning the sustainability of Thai community archives suggested by the four case studies.

CHAPTER 7

SUSTAINABILITY

7.1 INTRODUCTION

Along with other relevant issues in the community archive domain that had been discussed in Western literature, the area of sustainability appeared to be a concern, particularly in the article by Newman.²¹⁵ Since, as mentioned elsewhere, this study had applied two main frameworks for selection of the case studies: the Voice, Identity, Activism (VIA), a community-centric framework for approaching archives and recordkeeping by Gilliland, and the Sustaining Community Archives framework by Newman, the researcher could not avoid taking sustainability issues into consideration while designing the research methodology as they had been raised by studies of Western community archives. In this context, sustainability is taken to mean “the concept of maintaining at a proper level over time, and of responsibility to do so for future generations”.²¹⁶

During the data analysis, the researcher encountered a couple of well-written essays by anonymous students registered at the University of Liverpool that will be hereafter referred to as Student A and Student B, who apparently suggested two interesting different frameworks for responding to the essay question ‘What constitutes a sustainable service?’.²¹⁷ Student A adapted his/her idea of the ‘Triple Bottom Line’ suggested by Timothy Slaper and Tanya Hall that consisted of three main areas: profit (financial), people (social), and planet (environmental), which s/he had related to archival services as funding (for profit); staff, volunteers and external stakeholders (for people or social aspect); and archival repository building and consumption of resources (for planet or environmental aspect). His/Her main suggestion for approaching a sustainable service of archives comprised the following:

- 1) funding should not depend on one funding source and it was necessary to make wise decisions on budget spending on relevant projects;
- 2) smart investment was required in hiring temporary and permanent staff as well as providing essential professional development;

²¹⁵ Newman, J. 2011. 'Sustaining Community Archives', *Aplis*, 24, pp.37-45

²¹⁶ Ibid., p.38

²¹⁷ I am grateful to students on the MARM programme 2015/16 for sharing their ideas on sustainability which have informed the above discussion.

- 3) the needs of internal and external stakeholders should be constantly analysed for future sustainability planning;
- 4) technology should be used appropriately, such as considering digitisation for longevity of records and to ensure ongoing access; and
- 5) the use of green energy should be considered, and disaster planning as well as risk management should be in place.²¹⁸

Student B suggested that the sustainability of archival services could be achievable by applying a holistic approach utilising a combination of factors: 1) funding, 2) the needs of the community of users, 3) staffing, and 4) effective management of the service. In terms of funding, his/her suggestion was similar to that of Student A: to look for alternative sources of funding besides the main funding body, as well as providing other services or facilities on the site to earn more income – such as a café and bookshop – and, finally, that combining with other local services such as libraries, other archives and museums could enable a community archive to achieve a faster level of service and success when bidding for funds. The second aspect, on engaging the community of users, involved expanding the service to ensure more users could gain access to it, for example, to internet users who may be unable to visit the archival site; and the archives should ensure constant advocacy as well. S/he further suggested that archival professionals should be provided with the professional development needed for their jobs; and consideration should be given to engaging volunteers, which should provide benefits such as reducing costs and allowing an archive to engage more with the communities. The author suggested the final point of effective management to sustain the archival service. This included ensuring adequate staffing, policy and planning; the manager should have effective management of resources, processes and relations; and, lastly, ensuring the service meets continued compliance with required legislation.

Despite being exemplified by different frameworks, it could be seen that both students provided similar advice for guaranteeing effective management of the archival service to achieve a sustainable service. Their main ideas were combined by the researcher and can be illustrated as shown in the diagram below.

²¹⁸ Slaper, T.F., and T.J. Hall. 2011. 'The Triple Bottom Line: What Is It and How Does It Work?', *Indiana Business Review*, 86, pp.4-8

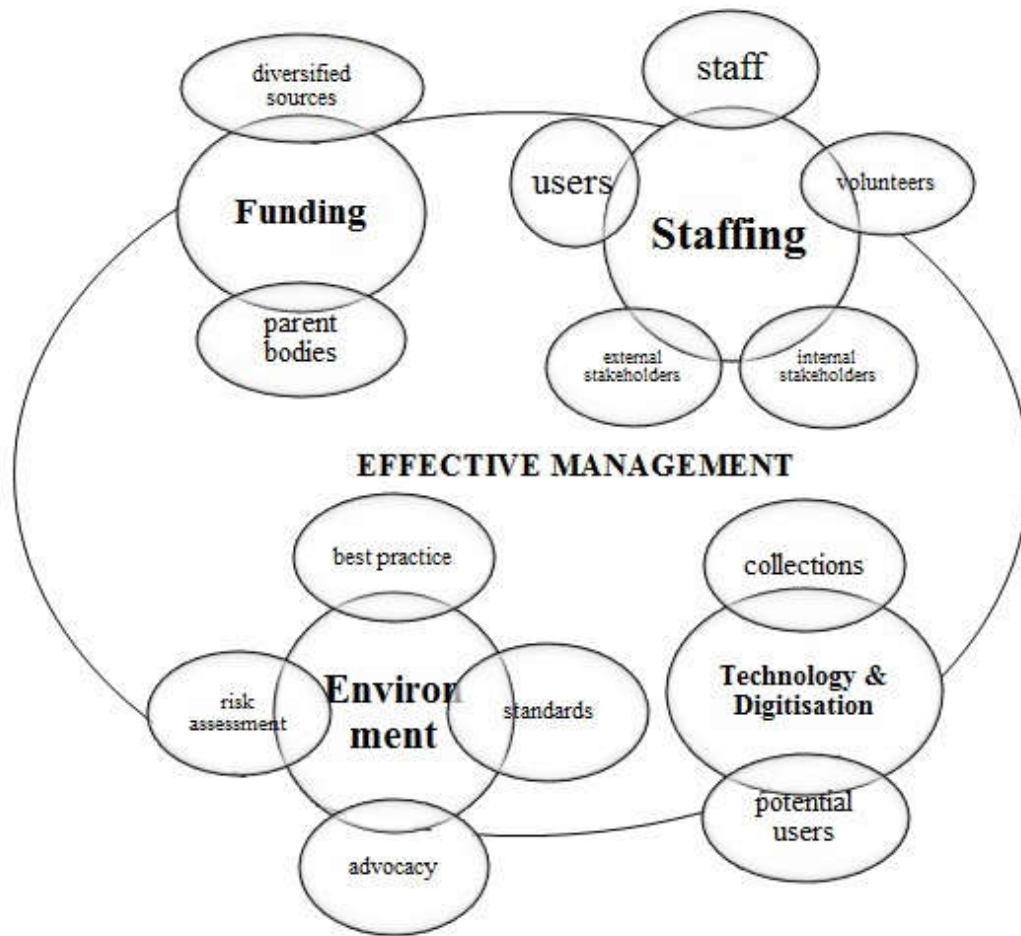


Figure 7: Effective management elements for sustainable archival services (adapted from Students A and B)

7.2 METHODOLOGY

The literature review suggested that the topic of sustainability should be a critical theme for data collection. The working framework was broadly designed in order to allow an inductive approach to the data collection so that the data obtained from the fieldwork could ‘speak for itself’ as much as possible.

The questions listed below were included in the semi-structured interview and were adapted based on different circumstances of each case study; however, they were used to guide the interviewing processes in order to support analysis of the sustainability issues of community-based heritage organisations and activities with which the community members engaged. The questions relevant for sustainability are as follows:

Where does the money/resources come from? (If there are separate budgets)

- Where did the core funding come from and where do the running costs come from?

Who is responsible for this collection (selecting, describing, preserving and/or making it accessible)?

- Are they always the same people or new people?
- Are there volunteers?

(Tangible) How is the collection / organisation managed / administered?

(Intangible) This event has taken place every year since your father's generation (or before). How do you ensure that all relevant activities for this ceremony are carried out in the same way as they used to be?

Subsidiary themes/further questions (as appropriate) might include:

- How do you remember the processes?
- Are these processes kept secret from the public?
- If you had to choose the next inherited leader, how would you pass knowledge of these processes to him/her?
- Have you been afraid that these processes might have been lost through time?
- Apart from you, is there anybody who knows about the event/work processes as much as you do?
- Is there a third party who plays a role in collecting activities of your collection/organisation?
- Has there been any interest from other organisations in offering a way of preserving this event/collection for you?
- Have you ever thought of recording this event?
 - If so, how would you do it? How should it be recorded?
 - Who would be responsible for the recording?
 - Where should the records be kept?
 - Who would be able to have access to the records?
 - Do you know whether this event has been recorded before?
 - If so, by whom and where are the records kept?

What are the challenges for keeping your collection or traditional activities?

What do you think will be the long-term future of your collection / organisation?

Subsidiary themes elicited/further questions to be posed (as appropriate):

- What if the head of this project was no longer interested in prolonging this collection or event, what would happen next? What would be the impacts of that decision?
- Who would be the one in charge of decision making for management of this collection/traditional activities in relation to any changes?

Interview transcriptions were encoded and the codes were analysed in order to identify which might relate to sustainability. These included: income sources, maintenance cost, staffing, heritage valuing, attitude towards future of the community-based heritage organisations, attitude towards future of heritage preservation/traditional practices, attitude towards temporal changes of heritage project/activity leaders, planning for substituted staff, knowledge transferring and education of traditions to younger generations, and signs of risk identification/risk management. The passages of the interviews so encoded form the basis of this chapter.

The findings show both some similarities to and some differences from the issues identified by Western commentators as well as problems with applying Western frameworks to the situation in Thailand. These similarities and differences will be further discussed in the concluding chapter, which will assess the relevance of Western frameworks for understanding practices in Thailand. In the current chapter, the discussion will emphasise the findings that are specific to the Thai context. The results discussed in this chapter will then contribute to the analysis contained in the final chapter. The chapter structure will follow the same order as the previous chapters about motivation and provenance; that is: discussing the MC, TM, DS, and GAL case studies separately.

CASE STUDY 1: INDIVIDUAL COLLECTOR AND OWNER OF MC CULTURAL HOME

7.3 INTERVIEWEES

MC SRS, male, an individual collector and the owner of MC Cultural Home

MC NID, female, a teacher in the Non-formal Education (NFE) office at MC district branch
(See more details about them as well as other interviewees from each case study in the
Methodology chapter, pages 84 – 89.)

7.4 SUSTAINABILITY IDENTIFIED FROM THE INTERVIEWS

7.4.1 Funding

7.4.2 Community support

7.4.3 Relationship with other local bodies

7.4.1 FUNDING

As mentioned in a previous chapter, the motivations of MC SRS were very personal but had a philanthropic aim. Even though MC SRS had a strong will and the motivation to maintain and represent community heritage on behalf of other community members, he himself could not promise a bright future for the Cultural Home since its survival was based on him as an individual founder, and he did not have sufficient funding to maintain the place.

These items you see on the ground floor are stored here because there is no suitable space to keep them yet, but one day I plan to build a room on this floor to keep them.

(MC SRS)



Picture 25: Part of the MC Cultural Home collections. This picture illustrates the ground floor, whose appearance suggests there are insufficient resources for maintenance.

The above picture suggests a lack of resources; and, although he had plans, MC SRS did not have the resources to implement them. The main reason for the lack of public funding related to his attitude towards requesting public funding for his own collections, which he considered inappropriate:

Regarding the support from the government sector, I used to tell them [about my situation] but they didn't seem to have any concern. I also thought that if I ask them for financial support, it means that I take public money for my own benefit, which is not the right thing. I would rather manage this myself and wish to pass it to the public when I'm no longer alive.

(MC SRS)

In addition to feeling embarrassed to ask for public funding to support his private collections, MC SRS also implied that the governmental system did not allow him, as a representative of other individuals who wished to initiate heritage preservation projects for his community, to access such funding since the government sector in general seemed to lack interest in supporting cultural projects because their outcomes were unlikely to bring financial benefits – or at least not quickly enough to demonstrate success within the financial evaluation period.

... Moreover, what I'm doing is the abstraction, which is difficult for them to assess the value of [if I ask for public funds].

(MC SRS)

Therefore, the limited opportunities to access public funding had become such an obstacle to the further development of the MC Cultural Home that MC SRS chose to ignore the lure of public funding and maintain the collections with his personal funds, reassuring himself with the feeling of fulfilment gained from doing good deeds for the benefit for his community and the general public.

There was only once support from the government sector: when I needed to replace the roof following wind damage. Most of the time, there was no other support from them.

(MC SRS)

In relation to the aforementioned issue of relying on personal resources more than on public funding, further investigation revealed that his personal resources only might not be enough to maintain his collections in the long term. From data obtained from the interviews and observation, it could be reasonable to argue that his personal resources were far from enough to support the survival of his collections, based on the following evidence:

- 1) Firstly, MC SRS was a retired teacher who did not receive a large pension.
- 2) Secondly, his museum or personal collections were open to the public free of charge; therefore, there was no income stream to support the collections' maintenance costs, even from visitors' donations.
- 3) Thirdly, although he mentioned that his museum or personal repository was included in a national database of local museums amongst other private and community-based heritage organisations, it was pointed out that this inclusion clearly did not bring about better conditions for the organisation since the main governmental authority that took care of cultural matters did not include these types of community-based organisations within their development planning, leaving them behind and struggling to survive on their own initiatives.

These three assumptions could partly be supported by some of the interview quotations provided above.

7.4.2 COMMUNITY SUPPORT

Another factor affecting sustainability relates to the MC community members themselves regarding to what extent they can perceive the value of their community heritage and have any desire to participate in such activities or participate in the initiatives for the benefit of future generations. Whilst it is clear, as discussed, that MC SRS is very strongly motivated to preserve his community's heritage on his community's behalf, it is less clear whether community members share his enthusiasm. This concern was addressed by an officer of the district Non-formal Education (NFE) office, MC NID, who had been working collaboratively with MC SRS as part of the non-formal educational support for her students, such as making visits to the MC Cultural Home to learn about local history.

...I would say that the current problem is that the MC people aren't aware of their own heritage value. ... I think it's more like neglect, for instance, from the organisations which could support this matter but they don't do anything about it such as the examples of [the famous] wild orchid or the gradual extinction of turtles which are only preserved by a group of people who live in that village [turtle village], so I think this is mostly based on the local people [to take action].

(MC NID)

A similar opinion was given by MC SRS regarding the issue of community members' perception of heritage value; he explained that he could sense their revised perception, which was a result of him publicising his collections via certain media, for example, television programmes.

Before the television broadcasts, there were fewer local visitors because they were born and live here so they neither care nor know what I do here and what there is for them to see here. After having seen it on television programmes, they learned about this place, including its purpose as a learning space and the background of its establishment as well as places for sightseeing located in the district.

(MC SRS)

The above quotations imply that publicising of personal collections actually provides benefits in raising not only the general public's awareness of them but, more importantly, that of the community members themselves, for them to acknowledge the value of their local heritage as

well as being inspired to protect it, similar to MC SRS's practices. It suggests that the more important problem is not lack of heritage valuing but lack of awareness – once they know about MC's collections, the public wanted to visit them.

In contrast to the above quotation, there was some evidence of optimism about an attempt to safeguard community heritage via educational activity, in that the following quotation suggests that local organisations DO value the resource as contributing to their mission, and the expertise of MC SRS, which might have an impact on the sustainability of the resource, and also that the educational activities might enhance local heritage awareness in future:

It came from our mission of NFE, which is to promote [life-long] learning about the locality; therefore, we have been taking our students including those in a group of 'Ban Lung Rien' students to visit the main learning centre about the district, which is the MC Cultural Home of MC SRS, so that the students will have knowledge about the history of the town.²¹⁹ Later, after MC SRS retired, we asked him to support us with our curricular development by asking for his museum to be part of our educational resources. ...He's been helping us for approximately nearly three years already.

(MC NID)

7.4.3 RELATIONSHIP WITH OTHER LOCAL BODIES

Even though MC SRS was running the museum with his own resources, there was some evidence of his collaboration with other experts in the field of museum management, including outreach via various activities that were related to heritage representation.

I was sometimes invited [by related heritage organisations] to participate in their events, such as two weeks ago the National Museum invited me to visit a museum in Pathum Thani province, outskirts of Bangkok. ...Last month, I was invited to speak on a topic related to Thai-Laos languages and culture.

²¹⁹ 'Ban Lung Rien' could be translated as 'Home After School'. It refers to a project that provide activities for the formally schooled students who normally spend time after school hours at the public library – part of the NFE services – to prevent them from drug addiction.

I was recently invited by an administrative team at MC hospital to help them to dress up in traditional costume on the day their hospital entered into the best hospital contest as they wanted to impress the evaluation committee. Moreover, they would like information about the history of MC town to include it in a presentation for the committee; therefore, I agreed to provide them with the information about a town slogan, which I had been engaging in constant revision of [normally a new phrase is added after something remarkable occurs that is connected to the town, such as to honour an Olympic champion who won a medal for weightlifting who was a native of MC town – researcher's note], and a song telling the history of the town, which I composed some years ago.

(MC SRS)

His advocacy suggests that an aspect of the intangible heritage could be preserved via his knowledge distribution relating to the local history and engaging with communities in a variety of ways, which seemed to be well adopted by local organisations well.

This section has discussed sustainability issues that emerged from the data analysis that comprised the areas of: 1) funding, 2) community support, and 3) relationship with other local bodies.

CASE STUDY 2: TM COMMUNITY

7.5 INTERVIEWEES

TM PKW, male, former abbot of THA temple who was a long-term leader of TM community heritage projects before his abandonment, which was caused by disgraceful rumours about him

TM CLD, male, retired primary school teacher and community activities coordinator, TM community

TM RTN, female, primary school teacher and native to TM community

TM BHU, male, 17-year-old grandson of TM PKW who was interested in constantly engaging in heritage activities of the community

TM SOS, male, a current abbot of TM forest temple who is a master in reading palmleaf manuscripts and inventor of the 3rd month annual ceremony

(See more details about them as well as other interviewees from each case study in the Methodology chapter, pages 84 – 89.)

7.6 SUSTAINABILITY IDENTIFIED FROM THE INTERVIEWS

7.6.1 Leadership

7.6.2 Funding

7.6.3 Risks, staffing and volunteers

7.6.4 Advocacy and collaboration with external bodies

COMMUNITY CONTEXT

In relation to sustainability of the heritage activities engaged in by TM community members, it was found from the data analysis that one specific element that appears to play a significant role in supporting the sustainability of the community activities is the strong cooperation amongst the community members in most common activities (not only heritage activities).

The context of this is the community's proudly presented background in relation to their heroic ancestors who led others on the journey from Laos to find a suitable location in which to settle nearly 450 years ago. The oral account of their ancestors has been passed from generation to generation; it tells the story of a husband and wife named SUTI and PUPA

respectively, who were the pioneers and leaders of the settlers who crossed the border from their hometown in Laos to reach their destination and establish the TM community. As mentioned, their names were joined to create a surname that has become a unique characteristic of the community and a clear connection between TM community members, even though they may move away to relocate in other communities or overseas. For these reasons, the boundary between individuals has become blurred since the community members respect their fellows to the same degree as their own relatives, as stated by one of the interviewees in the quotation below.

The TM society is what I would call a relatives-based society [sung-kom-bab-pii-nong – researcher’s note]. If you ever attend a social gathering event of this village, you will see that every single person will offer to facilitate that event without being told to do so.

(TM RTN)

Therefore, they would tend to share community resources and engage in community activities as much as they could in order to bring success to the group, since doing so would reduce the cost of community resources as well as complete the job more quickly and effortlessly.

Another prominent system developed by the TM community around a hundred years ago is the division of households into smaller groups of approximately 20 households each, which are called ‘Muard’. The ‘Muard’ system has become an easy system for distributing community tasks to everyone: for instance, during the Buddhist Lent, each Muard rotates their responsibility for providing lunch offerings to the monks. The heads of Muard are the main people who devote themselves to management issues relating to members of the Muard as well as to the heads themselves.

These remarkable characteristics of a strongly bonded community and systematic methods of community management suggest the capability of TM community members to succeed in heritage activities to a greater degree than other communities, as community projects require a lot of voluntary-minded people to drive them. This argument could possibly be supported by the point made by one of the community members, TM RTN, who seemed to agree that the majority of TM people were likely to be civic-minded in a way that could potentially be beneficial for community heritage projects and other public activities in general.

[Why do you think that relying on volunteers would be feasible for TM village?]

I'm quite positive about it because I notice from their personality [that they are minded to volunteer]....

(TM CLD)

... Personally, I think that TM villagers can complete many things and everything, for example, the annual 3rd month ceremony of the forest temple was successful solely with support from the villagers; the temple doesn't really have to pay for anything.

(TM RTN)

Moreover, the findings reveal that the temple appears to be a vital space for the community and that community members' lives connected to their temples for all spiritual aspects from birth to death, which results in ritual or ceremonial activities taking place regularly at the temples. During the data collection, every person interviewed, either formally or informally, would tell stories about their village that were related to the three temples situated in the TM community:

... There are three temples in TM village. The centre of their respected individual [literal translation] is at the forest temple, where the highly respected monk lives. The centre for religious ceremonies is at THA temple because it's in the middle of village. ... Monks of all three temples will be invited to participate in ceremonies of the village at THA temple. It is implicitly known by the villagers that all activities are conducted at THA temple without any formal announcement, unless there's a specific change to them and it will be done via the wired communication of the village. The north temple has old architecture such as a temple hall with the guarding lion statues at the staircases that have been of interest to the architects who often come to study them. ...

(TM RTN)

It is probably worth pointing out that the community temples were suitable for community heritage activities because they were felt by community members to be approachable and accessible, such as described by TM RTN in the following quotation:

I think that the temple is a good location for the learning centre to be situated because it's easily accessible. ... If it was located in any government organisation, this would immediately mean closing hours during the weekends. Supposedly, a teacher is hired to look after the centre; he or she would probably refuse to come for the weekends because they are his or her days off. If there is the need for them to come in during weekends, it's necessary to pay them for the extra hours; however, money is the key here. If it's located at the temple, PKW may be here and he could be a guide for the centre and take the visitors around. I think the temple is the suitable place for it [the learning centre].

(TM RTN)

In contrast to the potentially suitable physical space that community temples could provide for the community, it was found that digital technology to support the community heritage activities remained limited and challenging to apply. For instance, the example of TM CLD, who founded the collections of outdated tools and equipment donated by the TM community members, reported his ambition to make a copy of the list of items in computer format file; however, he could not achieve his intention, presumably due to lack of time or motivation to do so. It seemed that his intention to make a digital copy of the physical catalogue was simply for backup purposes as the physical catalogue was likely to be the most convenient tool for him when delivering the lessons.

I always thought to save them in computer files but I never got around to do so. ... I left it the physical catalogue in that room for anyone who would take over the project after me. I don't think the book would get lost as I intended to leave it as a memento. If there is no one to continue the project, I'm not bothered.

(TM CLD)

Although there was some evidence of him handing over his project to the community as the next custodian after his retirement since he did not found the collections for his own benefit and therefore did not take them to be kept privately at his own residence but left them at the same classroom, the above quotation shows that he had no further plan or interest in the next responsible person.

The researcher also had the opportunity to participate in a couple of events held at THA temple, which is the main temple where religious as well as general community activities normally take place. Not only is it the temple that plays an important part in community members' lives as the central space for their activities, it is the highly respected monks themselves who retain the community's connection with the temple; and it is the monks who are central to the community by connecting people with the temple (space) and the religious activities (belief and faith). They are very clearly central to community identity, and, as long as the monks continue to play this central role, the association of heritage with the temples would seem to support its sustainability. Secularisation would be a risk but Thailand currently has no secularisation agenda.²²⁰

Three of the five interviewees from the TM community are regular community members whereas the other two are monks (abbot and ex-abbot of two village temples). One of the prominent findings that emerged from this case study in particular is that the monks are regarded as very important figures in the community:

Personally, ever since I was born, I learnt that the centre for villagers' minds is the senior priest [SILA]. Whenever the name of the priest is mentioned, everyone becomes fully cooperative. The villagers always have faith in him that I there used to have a saying 'whenever the grandfather priest wish, everything is possible'. Therefore, I think that good discipline comes from the centre of the villagers' mind pillar [literal translation], which includes the temple and the grandfather priest. ... Villagers have high respect for him, just as they have named all streets in the village after our former leaders.

(TM RTN)

²²⁰ McCargo, D. 2004. 'Buddhism, Democracy and Identity in Thailand', *Democratization*, 11, pp.155-170



Picture 26: A shelter with a statue of the ex-abbot, SILA, who was highly respected by TM villagers when he was alive, and the respect persists, such that villagers will stop at any occasion to give respect to him when they visit THA temple, where the statue is situated (researcher's observation).

For Thai society with the influence of social class derived from foreign culture, especially from India, monks were considered as scholars who represented symbolic wisdom; therefore, they would normally obtain more access to intellectual resources and were more literate than ordinary people.²²¹ Consequently, the monks played an important role as educational leaders of communities as the temples are associated with learning and therefore, if the heritage is associated with the temple and is intended for learning, the new activities are reinforced by association with existing practice.

7.6.1 LEADERSHIP

Research findings regarding the TM community case study have highlighted the significant relationship between temple (as space), monks (as leadership symbol), and traditional activities (as community memory). The leadership aspect seems to appear frequently across the findings obtained from different interviewees. The TM community presents a very strong impetus to preserve their traditions; and it is suggested that this is connected with having strong leadership, especially spiritual leaders such as the monks, who play an important role

²²¹ Reid, A. 2015. 'The Buddhist Ecumene and Sanskritization', in Reid, A. (ed.) *A History of Southeast Asia*. [electronic book]: *Critical Crossroads* (West Sussex: Wiley), pp. 68-72

as leaders and facilitators of the community's heritage preservation initiatives. As will be suggested, strong leadership has contributed to these activities; however, there is some evidence that over-dependence on leaders can be a risk.

In order to gain support from the community members, TM PKW had to find a suitable approach, since he was aware that as a monk he could not obtain money from employment but he could gain trust from the community members via religion or faith in him as an individual if he could act as a moral model for the public benefit, not for himself. If he could achieve this strategic trust, the community members would be willing to support him in the development of any projects that he had planned to complete for them.

...I thought if I wanted to help them it wouldn't be wise to leave the monk status because I had no backup power. Furthermore, if I stayed as a monk, I still had a lot of connections, especially with government authorities, which would be beneficial if making a request for any support [for development].

(TM PKW)

This quotation shows how monks are very well integrated into Thai governmental structures due to the long relationship between Buddhism and the state, which had been influenced by government policies for a long time. As Somboon Suksamran pointed out, "As the most respected and the least suspected leader in the village, the abbot seems to have greater capacity to act as an effective intermediary between the government and the villagers than the village headman and the school headmaster. Significantly, the abbot's co-operation would also suggest religious sanction for government policies".²²²

In addition to the monks, who are normally respected by TM community members and have a significant leadership role, the findings also suggest that this faith in individuals was extended to 'ordinary' people who had gained recognition through their expertise or professionals, no matter where they resided, as long as they were originally from the TM community. The research findings showed some of the reasons that stimulated the community members to value individual models, as can be seen in the quotations below.

²²² Suksamran, S. 1977. *Political Buddhism in Southeast Asia: the role of the Sangha in the modernization of Thailand* (London: Hurst), pp. 76 – 77. Although this was written almost 40 years ago, the situation in rural Thailand has not greatly changed.

They were the pioneers for us; therefore, we wanted to refer to their honour so that our young generations will know and think of them, who played a part in our village development. This is our community characteristic for valuing their honour.

(TM CLD)

(In response to the researcher's question: Why do you think that TM community members seem to have voluntary mind for the community's activities?): I think it might be leaders because we have visionary leaders. Every election for leaders will be done carefully because the villagers believe that good leaders will make everything good as well. The villagers will discuss amongst themselves regarding each candidate, whether s/he can be a leader who will support traditional preservation of the community or not.

(TM RTN)



Picture 27: Street name signs inspired by the names of important community members who were mostly leaders of the community. For example, the one on the left-hand side was derived from the main family name used by the majority of TM villagers as it was invented to remember the pioneers of their community; whereas the sign on the right-hand side was named after the family name of one of the district heads who was born in TM village. It is worth noting that the street names were written in standard Thai on the lower line and Tai Noi (local script) on the top line (researcher's observation).

There was also evidence of a young successor, TM BHU, who seemed to be someone with the potential to lead community heritage projects in the future since he had grown up with TM PKW and had shown enthusiasm for safeguarding the local tradition and culture. Moreover, he had also demonstrated his enthusiasm for heritage conservation by applying the skills and knowledge he had gained from the workshops initiated by TM PKW and putting

them into practice in a small project conserving the palmleaf manuscripts at a temple in another province, as required by the temple's abbot, a friend of his uncle. Although he was only an amateur, he did not hesitate to lead the project with support from the novice monks staying there. He conducted that activity in one summer before he passed to Matthayom 4 [equivalent to 10th grade in high school] and its successful completion had brought happiness to all the monks and villagers, who celebrated the restored collections of palmleaf manuscripts with a procession around the temple. Unfortunately, he did not have the opportunity to educate the monks and villagers about the inscribed languages in the way that he had done, although he had left a textbook that he used during the workshops with the head priest of that temple as he was interested in knowing about the languages.

I made this project solely based on my judgement. ... Yes, I asked for advice from PKW or mentors, but they trusted me to carry it on myself.

(TM BHU)

The above discussion of some findings has shown that the TM community's key figures, the monks in particular, have a considerable impact on the survival of the community's traditional heritage. Nevertheless, despite respect for the monks and confidence in their leadership, problems can emerge. For instance, an individual monk, TM PKW, led various developing projects for the TM community but was subsequently enmeshed in a scandal and was forced to leave the village after 'Phase One' of this research was conducted. The conservation of the palmleaf manuscript collections was amongst his initiatives for preserving community heritage, and was left incomplete after he had to temporarily abandon it. This incomplete mission also included his attempt to educate the villagers on the written texts in the manuscripts in order to retrieve as much of the knowledge inscribed in them as they could. TM PKW gave his opinion on the future of his initiatives at the THA temple while residing outside his village:

If we want this project to continue, I have no clue about the inherited person. However, I believe there will definitely be one person, although I can't tell who that will be. CLD has potential for it. Acceptance happens when villagers have faith in that person. If there's no faith in that person, it's meaningless, no matter how nice the person is. Therefore, it's difficult to find that particular someone although I keep looking for him/her. At this point, I have to stay calm and let go for now.

(TM PKW)

Evidence of recent active leadership beyond the monks was provided in the person of TM CLD, who had been generally accepted by TM community members because he was a good public relations model and was devoted to engaging the TM community in activities. He was always keen on disseminating knowledge about the locality as well as taking part in community heritage activities, one of which was his own initiative: the collections of outdated tools and equipment already mentioned. Again, however, the analysis reveals some evidence of the risks associated with having a single leader, regardless of TM CLD's attempt to preserve his community heritage as well as his efforts to teach the next generations to appreciate the value of their ancestral culture and tradition. TM CLD believed that there was no will to maintain the collections that he had set up at his own school, the community's primary school. He was not sure if his ex-colleagues would retain the collections and continue to use them to educate the pupils about local history and heritage value.

As for the recent revival, I had added the manuscript languages into the school curriculum to teach students, but I'm not sure if the next teacher would continue with my established project or not. This may be the last era of it, who knows. ... As for the language preservation project, I don't know about that now because I retired from that already. The new school principal may support other projects, but the former principal liked my project; therefore, he supported the establishment of Tai Noi scripts signboard. I don't know what the new principal's preference will be. It's a different time from when I used to be there.

(TM CLD)

Based on an interpretation of TM CLD's above quotation, it was understood that he viewed the essence of heritage preservation as a continuous process, which involved a cycle of growth and deterioration notably in terms of the tangible heritage aspects such as the collections he had established at his previous workplace, the community's primary school, and the revival of languages recorded in the palmleaf manuscripts. Nevertheless, this had also implied the risks of a project being associated with a single leader, as he reported his concern for the projects left behind by TM PKW:

I actually have a concern about it. The situation is similar to that after the death of the senior priest, SILA: that these manuscripts had been abandoned for more than 50 years. From now on, I'm not sure if this is going to be abandoned for another time and would it be revived or not.

[Why do you think that relying on volunteers would be feasible for TM village?]

I'm quite positive about it because I notice from their nature of well cooperation. However, nobody knows what the future will be.

(TM CLD)

These two quotations show that TM PKW's departure meant his projects were at a standstill, which highlights the risk of over-dependence on a single leader.

7.6.2 FUNDING

Based on the strong bonds found in the TM community, it was found that community members demonstrated forward thinking concerning the establishment of a community foundation. The foundation has grown from the original small amount of money donated by members of one family that had moved away from the TM community to relocate in other provinces but who were grateful to their hometown. After one of their return trips to the TM community, they had donated some money to be spent on public matters from which the community committee had agreed to establish a village fund.

It originated from money donated by relatives to one person, who came from this village but was on a posting as provincial governor of RYG province. He had passed away and the relatives and his children came back to the village to offer a donation to the temple. The fund originated from that donated money, for 40,000 THB. ...All the families of this village have the same SUTIPUPA surname. Therefore, the fund has existed since 1990 with the starting amount of 40,000 THB. ...There is a committee, which includes three representatives per a village unit. We also give loans to the villagers in need from this fund. The fund is approximately more than 1 million THB at present. It's been increasing from donations from time to time, such as from funeral leftover budgets. ... It's the village foundation.

It is noticeable that the original fund was donated by members of a single family, who appeared to have the same common surname, ‘SUTIPUPA’, as the majority of TM people; therefore, the fund was named after that surname. Labelling the fund with the common surname of the TM villagers also implied the strongly bonded relationship of this community in particular, which resulted in the good cooperation of most community members whenever they had to make a decision about the community fund together. The fund had been managed to meet the requirements of the original donor: to provide benefits for public affairs, as shown in the quotation below.

The fund has been divided into five budgets for different purposes including public benefits, educational scholarship, Boon Bung Fai, and costs for presents for older people honoured at the Song Kran gratitude ceremony. ...From the loans to villagers the interest will return to the funding in May every year. The money earned from this loan interest will be used for future public activities.

(TM CLD)

With respect to the strongly bonded characteristic of the TM community, it is probably necessary to mention that one of the community’s strengths in cooperation was its efficiency in developing its own systems to maintain its peaceful and orderly fashion; for example, the development of a ‘100 Baht system’, in which the members on the funeral fund list will donate 100 Baht to support the funeral arrangements of deceased family members.

It is also necessary to note that the TM community had managed to allot a separate budget from the community fund for the cost of building a community learning centre, which was initially planned by TM PKW before he faced the scandal. The project was suspended at the time that the data collection took place, but it was confirmed by TM CLD that the community members, especially the team leaders – namely the village and district headmen and the committee – had agreed to continue with the project even though it may take longer than TM PKW’s initial plan.



Picture 28: Empty land inside THA temple grounds where the community's learning centre was planned to be founded. The foundation pillars were already installed, but work had been suspended until a suitable project leader could be named.

7.6.3 RISKS, STAFFING AND VOLUNTEERS

The analysis found other areas that were relevant to the aforementioned discussion around the over-dependency on leadership that could indicate a risk to the sustainability of TM community-based heritage initiatives, since these activities appeared to be dependent on individuals such as TM PKW and TM CLD rather than being committed to the community's systemised structure such as the community governing and funding committee as previously specified. This over-dependency has been revealed in the risk of project termination after an individual could no longer be the leader and complete the project, such as happened to TM PKW, resulting in the work being interrupted. Having mentioned that, further investigation had been made in order to understand to what extent the TM villagers had planned for relevant risks to their heritage projects, which were mostly dependent on the key individuals.

The main figure, TM PKW, had the following opinion:

According to my opinion, whatever happens to me, the work has to keep going as planned. This is my aim. ... Whatever happened to me, I still wish to preserve tradition as it is important for the younger generation so that they won't forget about their original background. ... This doesn't mean I think of abandoning this project but it's normal to be suspended. My idea is that I will try to do my best even though there's

no guarantee of what the results will be. I think that changing is normal for everything, depending on the contemporary situation; however, as long as work is carried on, it will still keep growing no matter what takes place. ...Yes, I can start any project somewhere else and this means there will be no ending. ...Yes, I am 100% confident that I will return to the village one day.

(TM PKW)

The above quotations from TM PKW are suggestive of a nonstrategic and intuitive attitude regarding heritage-documenting activities of the community. Nevertheless, despite his frustration at not having identified a successor, he was very confident that the project would continue. A similar opinion had been shared by TM CLD, who appeared to have a positive attitude towards the uncertain circumstances of local heritage preservation based on the strongly bonded characteristic of the members. This meant that he personally felt confident about the future of heritage preservation in the TM community, even though this would involve the intuitive process mentioned before. It was apparent that TM CLD played an important advocacy role for his hometown community. This specific role could help to encourage or raise awareness of heritage valuing amongst the community members.

As well as the weakness and strengths already mentioned – which included leadership dependency and good cooperation respectively – that formed part of the TM community's characteristics, there was also evidence that a potential source of support could possibly obtain from external organisations such as local government agencies for hiring the supplementary staff to care for their learning centre. However, mentioning the demand for external support did not indicate a failure to self-manage the community heritage. On the contrary, the findings showed that community support actually provided the power for the community to negotiate with external parties in order to safeguard their heritage, since the community members could potentially hire a professional to maintain their community-based heritage organisation.

I'm quite positive about TM villagers that it [self-management of community heritage – researcher's interpretation] is feasible. If the set up fund is sufficient, it may be possible to hire a person from that budget. Alternatively, it may be possible to request support from the local municipality to arrange a member of staff from any

educational organisation and allocate salary for him/her. This model of working with the local municipality was from one of the educational field trips I have seen.

(TM CLD)

The above quotation shows that TM CLD had thought of an alternative solution for staffing for the community's learning centre besides relying on community members volunteering, as he may have been aware of the risk of solely depending on volunteers. He referred to the competency to hire a professional by using the community fund to pay their salary. This suggests a confidence to manage heritage collections based on the idea of self-autonomy, without fear of losing control of their authority over the heritage management.

In contrast to the optimism presented by TM PKW and TM CLD as discussed above, there was evidence of problems caused by relying on volunteers, as reported by TM RTN:

Personally, I hope that the local municipality may provide some budget to hire a keeper curator for the learning centre. It may be possible that the District Administrative Organisation could allocate a budget to be a salary for the keeper as there's probably no one who wants to do it as a volunteering job without payment. However, if PKW is there, he may ask some high school children playing around the temple to take care of the centre, which I don't think is appropriately because it's going to be a messy system.

(TM RTN)

The above quotation suggested that there was a perception of lack of planning in using volunteers. Although TM RTN thought it would be possible to find someone to be a curator, she suggested that human resources should be included in the criteria for support to be sought from the local government to ensure that a curator for the community's heritage organisation would be committed to the job as they could be paid from the budget allocated by the government sector, which she thought would be more sustainable than utilising voluntary curators.

7.6.4 ADVOCACY AND COLLABORATION WITH EXTERNAL BODIES

Some issues emerged from the data analysis that could be related to the sustainability of TM heritage activities and which partly related to the efforts of some key individuals in the community, such as TM PKW and TM CLD, who apparently had distinctive personalities that enabled them to direct their community fellows in the heritage activities.

TM CLD was respected by other TM members for his self-dedication in engaging with almost all community activities and his enthusiasm for local history. One of the activities that he was always volunteering to do was to act as a moderator or speaker on behalf of his village fellows regarding general village events or news via wire broadcasting from the village. Sometimes, the news might involve details about fund raising for the village activities; and during the long broadcasting period, he would entertain the villagers by telling stories about TM village which highlighted the migration of the ancestors from the neighbouring country, Laos, to the area. He would also add stories about different leaders of the village from the past to the present to emphasise their important roles in village development.

... He TM CLD normally makes an announcement during village activities when a donation is needed that we would find historical information about the village to talk about while he was speaking via the wired broadcasting. It's his personality, especially when there are visitors to the village; he would normally tell them about the history of the village. ... He is also known as the public relations person for the village.

He will also talk about successful individuals in various careers or academic professions from past to present. This implies that everything he tells us is related to our leaders, which can confirm that leaders are the centre of villagers' minds. Thus, he keeps telling us about this. ... He even composed a folk song himself and names of leaders from the past were mentioned in the song. He made intensive research about individual leaders of this village.

...Everyone would be proud of oneself. He would seek out local scholars within the village by approaching them and asking them to tell stories such as talking with the

best former folk-song singer or the best skilful maker of knitted fishnets; and he even takes photographs of them sometimes.

(TM RTN)

Even though this is only a prediction and is impossible to evaluate the results beyond the scope of this thesis, it might be sensible to argue that TM CLD's lifetime engagement had had an implicit impact on internal cooperation amongst the community members as it had made them proud of their identity and background.

TM PKW, who had brought in academics with expertise in palmleaf manuscript preservation from a university via his personal connections, had also enabled partnership agreements. According to TM PKW, this project was referred to as a 'win-win' situation because the university researchers would publish research papers, whilst the TM community would have the opportunity to conserve their manuscripts and preserve them in a better condition for future generations.

They have funding and a project plan; therefore, they get money and recognition. However, we have demonstrators. Moreover, since they have money, they can provide free meals to us as part of the workshop as well as take us for educational trips. Basically, they get recognition, academic work or promotion whereas we get community assets [people who are knowledgeable in reading and writing the manuscripts]. ... In addition, working with the university also earns trust from villagers because they'd rather believe the institution more than individuals like me. I was thinking about strategy: to invite the university to be part of the project because I knew that villagers would trust the university better.

(TM PKW)

The relationship with the local university has had numerous benefits in addition to learning languages used in writing the manuscripts such as Tai Noi and Dharma scripts; the workshop also benefited some interested community members to learn more about their own original background in relation to the story of their ancestral migration which has been proudly transmitted from generation to generation. It is apparent that the relationship is a mutually beneficial partnership in which both parties have an impact.

The field trip to visit a village in Laos was arranged at the community members' request so that they could learn more about their own community history. Moreover, additional trips to visit other villages or communities that engaged in similar heritage preservation activities were also included in the workshop programmes so that the community members could exchange their ideas with other communities and could possibly help them to expand their network and collaboration in the future.

This section has discussed findings on sustainability found from the TM community case study TM community, comprising the themes of: 1) leadership, 2) funding, 3) risks, staffing and volunteers, and 4) advocacy and collaboration with external bodies.

CASE STUDY 3: DS COMMUNITY

7.7 INTERVIEWEES

DS CPG, male, spiritual leader of DS community

DS ABB, male, abbot of Pone Chai temple

DS GFT, female, main curator of Phi Ta Khon museum and teacher in the Non-formal Education (NFE) office

DS GIN, male, the main responsible person for making the two giant Phi Ta Khon puppets for the annual Boon Luang festival

DS SML, male, a teacher at the NFE at DS district branch who is also head of DS GFT and leader of a small group of Phi Ta Khon performers amongst other local groups

DS TAN, female, a visitor to the festival and a producer of cultural programmes hired by the Ministry of Culture

(See more details about them as well as other interviewees from each case study in the Methodology chapter, pages 84 – 89.)

7.8 SUSTAINABILITY IDENTIFIED FROM THE INTERVIEWS

7.8.1 Funding

7.8.2 Staffing

7.8.3 Leadership

7.8.4 Collaboration with external bodies

7.8.5 Sustainability of intangible heritage

COMMUNITY CONTEXT

As already discussed, the DS community is famous for its annual festive tradition, the Boon Luang, which includes religious and belief rites together with the charismatic entertainment known as the Phi Ta Khon performance, which has become the highlight of the DS district, attracting the highest number of tourists to the community. Alongside its festival aspect, the community itself presents a strong cultural and traditional commitment, which is apparent in most DS community members and the nearby neighbourhood. The DS community is similar to many other communities in Thailand or the Isan region in terms of its mixture of belief in

Buddhism alongside a belief in spirits and gods which has been embedded in Thai communities for a very long time.

DS community members are famous for their traditional lifestyle; and, similar to the TM community, the findings emphasise the significant roles of the temple in community members' lifestyles, especially the main temple (Pone Chai temple) where most religious and belief ceremonial activities usually take place, as well as at DS CPG's – the main spiritual leader's – house. Therefore, besides the spiritual leader, who is well respected by DS locals since he is always the organiser of all of the community's events, there is another important person, the abbot of the Pone Chai temple. The abbot plays the role of facilitator amongst many stakeholders such as the community members, the spiritual leader, local government officers and the tourists as his place, the temple, is the centre of almost all the events that happen in the community. As a consequence of its importance, the temple was selected to host a Phi Ta Khon museum whose purpose is to represent the annual festival of the DS community and especially to promote the PTK performance.

The Phi Ta Khon players normally have their main show on grand procession day when huge crowds of tourists watch the procession passing by and are sometimes 'fooled' by the Phi Ta Khon performers as part of their traditional interaction with the audience. The procession ends at the Pone Chai temple after the completion of three circles of procession around the temple hall. More festival activities take place at the temple for the rest of its three-day period.

7.8.1 FUNDING

The Phi Ta Khon museum at Pone Chai temple was created as an attraction for the tourists who visit the community throughout the year and its maintenance budget is dependent on donations from these tourists, and is allocated to cover temple costs and museum maintenance. In addition to the donated money, the temple owns a small souvenir shop situated next to the museum in order to earn more income to support both temple and museum. Moreover, the temple is also responsible for hiring a museum curator and a shopkeeper, which had led to some financial problems as stated in the interview with DS ABB as follows.

...Regarding the income from donation at the museum, it is honestly not enough to pay the monthly bills...because we didn't ask for certain fee to visit the museum; therefore, it is entirely depended on the visitors' donation. ...This income from donation isn't enough to pay the bills and salary for the museum caretaker, but we have some income from the shop to support the payment. ...

(DS ABB)

The Phi Ta Khon museum was neglected by the local government after the museum was handed over to the temple after the building renovation that was funded by the government sector. However, it was clear that the government only focused on an agenda for completion of the infrastructure and content exhibiting inside the museum (which was mismatched with the needs of the abbot of the Pone Chai temple – discussion of this issue can be found in the ‘Motivation’ chapter, pages 137 – 139) whilst the maintenance of the museum was excluded. The funders had transferred this burden to the temple to manage and the findings showed that the abbot was having difficulties, especially in terms of funding and staffing. For this reason, the temple, which consisted of an abbot and some novices, could only provide simple and ad hoc maintenance such as cleaning.

The temple staff look after maintenance of the museum including cleaning the building and trimming the lawn. There are staff from the NFE to support them as information providers to tourists.

(DS ABB)

The other museum, called the ‘Cultural Hall for DS Locality and Tradition’, was established from DS CPG’s personal budget along with a research fund provided by a local university researcher, RTNA, who had been conducting research on the social and cultural aspects of the DS community for a number of years. According to the interview with DS CPG, it was suggested that no funding was allocated for management of the museum:

...I haven't found a potential person yet but I keep thinking about it. ...This may be my children or a staff member from a cultural organisation. If I hire someone from outside, there will be a cost for that. How am I able to afford his/her salary as I am doing this voluntarily and it is difficult to find someone with a voluntary mindset like me.

(DS CPG)

As mentioned in the quotation, hiring staff would inevitably involve salary costs, which was not in his plan for museum maintenance as he pointed out that his museum was not for profit; thus, the curator would have to be a voluntary-based position. Therefore, he did not have a plan to establish a stable fund to hire a suitable person. This situation could inform the risk of sustainability in terms of staff responsible for the museum for the long term if DS CPG could not manage to find a suitable person, who would agree to commit to the job without payment for a long period of time. If he was unable to do so, the museum would mainly be dependent on DS CPG himself, and this would potentially cause another risk since he appeared to be very busy with community activities and he was unlikely to be available at the museum most of the time, resulting in uncertainty as to the museum's status quo. In conjunction with the volunteering aspects of this museum, more discussion can be found in the next topic, staffing.

7.8.2 STAFFING

Following the discussion in the previous section regarding funding in relation to voluntary staff at DS CPG's museum or the 'Cultural Hall for DS Locality and Tradition', some concerns were identified by DS CPG in relation to finding a suitable person to look after the museum. These concerns apparently involved the level of trust required and knowledge of the content exhibited in his museum. Therefore, the ideal curator who would be suitable for the voluntary job at DS CPG's museum would be likely to be a person who had a close relationship with DS CPG and should be a representative of the DS community who could communicate DS tradition and culture correctly.

... And if that person is volunteering to do the job but he or she may have limitations in knowledge, so I am rather thinking of ones who are close to me ... such as maybe one of Poh Saens, but I am not sure whether they will have time to do so because they already have a lot to do such as taking care of the Stupa – that requires four of them at a time.

(DS CPG)

Whilst DS CPG looked for a volunteer from his circle of trusted confidants, DS ABB, the key person who managed the Phi Ta Khon museum, had a different approach in relation to his museum staff. During the data collection period, the Phi Ta Khon museum had support from

the Non-formal Education (NFE) office staff member DS GFT to help with guiding visitors through the museum and temple hall. It was pointed out by DS ABB that there should be a paid curator of the museum from the donation fund allocated by the temple. However, despite having a budget to hire a curator for the museum, the findings show that human resource management needs improvement in order to attract the right person and persuade them to commit to the job for the longer term, as the previous hired curator had left to seek a job in the mainstream sector.

Actually, the temple usually hired a person to regularly look after the museum and the temple would get help from the NFE only during busy times at the festival period. However, there isn't anyone available during this time because she [the regular staff member] is on a break to look for another job at the moment. She had been helping here for several months but she's now looking for a new job and taking some pre-employment tests. After she finishes her tasks, she may come back to help us again.

(DS ABB)

There was not enough information to identify the criteria for recruitment of a museum curator. However, the interview data implies that the job was unlikely to assure long-term employment for the curator for a number of reasons including the unsustainable budget earned from donations and the souvenir shop, as well as the potential lack both of career development and future plans for human resource management.

DS GFT was assigned from her workplace, the Non-formal Education (NFE) office, as an additional task to her core responsibility as a teacher of adults who did not have any opportunity to study in the ordinary school system; and she perceived the museum curating task as a voluntary, unpaid role. There was not enough information to discuss the criteria for the recruitment of the previous curator for the Phi Ta Khon museum, but it was indicated by DS ABB that she had been a new graduate from college or university [presumably with no related educational background in museum curating]. Since this usual curator was on temporary leave so that she could take different pre-employment tests, DS CFT was assigned by her organisation to cover the position, presumably until the usual curator returned or until DS ABB hired a new curator. Both DS GFT and DS ABB confirmed that the Pone Chai temple and the NFE always had a good relationship; therefore, this support from staff from

the NFE was provided on a voluntary basis and there was presumably no clear agenda on the terms of the support, such as timing and scope of job.

...No, there isn't [I didn't get extra payment for this job] ...it's a voluntary job. There may be some support for the photograph frames given by some organisations but mainly the job is for charity, such as there is no charge for being a moderator [information provider at the museum] that I am responsible for daily. ...This position is rotated between three of us but it is mainly me. I come every day including the weekends, but my hours may be less during the examination season when I have to balance the time between the teaching and the curating jobs. However, I tend to stay [at the museum] for full days every day during the high season [festival time]. ...

(DS GFT)

The data suggested that she had no previous experience of museum curation; therefore, she simply did not find it interesting and did not know what to do in the role, whereas being a tour guide could fulfil her local pride on behalf of local people by introducing the community to outsiders. Moreover, as a curator, she did not have authority to make any decision concerning the museum because the ultimate judgement would depend on DS ABB's decision as the head of the temple and its properties, including the museum. The findings show that the temple receives insufficient funds to maintain the museum due to its dependence on donations. Moreover, the analysis implied that having a clear scope of employment for the curating job would have helped to keep a staff member for a longer period of time, in addition to having sufficient money, since the staff member may gain more confidence and recognition in her job and thus develop a positive commitment to the post.

Furthermore, evidence from the data analysis suggests that both museums – the Phi Ta Khon museum of the Pone Chai temple and DS CPG's 'Cultural Hall for DS Locality and Tradition' – faced challenges regarding maintenance issues (meaning all aspects of ongoing operations). Both museums were opened in a rush due to pressure of time; however, the pressure was driven by different factors. The Phi Ta Khon museum project had to be completed within the funding timeframe, whilst CPG's museum had to be opened in time to serve the tourists during the festival. Further analysis suggests a lack of funding and staffing for both museums as well as the premature conditions due to their urgent opening for the first public access. This was because maintenance was always less of a priority than the initial

construction and appearance of the building. At the time the data collection took place, DS CPG's museum was newly opened, but there was no clear planning for its opening hours. DS CPG was the main person responsible for this, and he said that the hours were fairly flexible and he could walk the visitors around the museum if he had free time. In relation to DS CPG's aforementioned quotations regarding the lack of planning for staffing, it was also implied by observational data that the reason why DS CPG did not assign anyone to be responsible for the museum was not only because of the lack of budget to hire the staff and a lack of trust in their knowledgeability of the museum's content, which was implied by his interview responses, but could also be interpreted in relation to the concept of public space inside DS CPG's residential complex. The complex always had a warm, welcoming atmosphere for all visitors since his house was a spiritual space where the most respected symbols, the royal spirits, would be present for all members of the DS community via DS CPG's spiritual leading role. For this reason, general visitors who had come across the museum by chance whilst visiting DS CPG might also recognise that his house was, in effect, a public space, and would have the opportunity to learn about the community's traditions at the same time. It was also observed that his house was located by DS district's main road, which allowed easy access for visitors.

7.8.3 LEADERSHIP

Similar to the TM community, the findings for the DS community had confirmed the significance of some community members, who would normally be at the forefront of any community activities; thus, trust in these leaders is essential. Having trust in a person will allow that person to prove himself to his followers for the years he is in power. All being well, faith in that person from his fellows will gradually increase and he would become a good model for the community. For this reason, DS CPG and the previous spiritual leaders have to ensure that they meet the expectations of the community and do not disappoint, which would result in loss of faith in them. Based on the interview data, the spiritual leader DS CPG had committed himself to the role, which represented a moral image, and thus his self-esteem had been increased because he believed he had achieved the requirements of his role; therefore, his righteousness had resulted in community cohesion.

It is in addition to spiritual and cultural leading roles but I am willing to help them. For instance, if someone from school, temple or village comes to see me asking for help with their lack of funding, I can help to raise occasional funding to support them.

I depend on the Chao Nai's prestige to succeed with the fund raising by implying a strategy to enhance people's conscience to donate for good will. In other words, I am leading them to make benefits to the community and at the same time I have to be a good model for them.

(DS CPG)

Having a firm commitment to the leader may be an advantage for keeping the community tradition as long as the followers are still happy with their leader; however, there may be a potential risk that the followers will lose faith in the leader and thus in the community tradition if the leader cannot promise to meet their expectations regarding his morality. For this particular DS community, there is one significant element to keep in mind regarding their faith, which does not only focus on the spiritual leaders themselves but the faith also covers beyond them – the guardian spirits of the community. Although DS CPG can lead most community activities and gain his followers' firm trust, he himself has to obey the royal spirits, which is believed to make crucial decisions regarding the community ceremonies, especially the Boon Luang and Phi Ta Khon festival.

...For example, the conducting of spiritual communion in order to find suitable dates for the annual Boon Luang and Phi Ta Khon festival, which has been taking place every year: one must understand that the dates could not be given without the spiritual communion as the royal spirit would decide the dates for us. It is impossible to specify the dates in advance because there is no communication with the royal spirit as yet. This is the unique practice, which I have to steadily follow. If the dates are already given by the royal spirit, no matter if the period of the festival falls into weekdays or weekends, this decision is already finalised without further appeals because this is the sacred aspect of his command.

(DS CPG)

Having emphasised leadership and dependency in relation to having faith in the leader, however, there could be a risk that the leader's power would be challenged and the leader discredited if any community members disagreed with DS CPG's power in his role of spiritual leadership.

Even if this was assigned by Taan [polite pronoun to call the royal spirit], there are some people who did not believe that I was really assigned by the royal spirit and they wanted to challenge me....I don't know, but [I think] there is one thing. Being Chao Poh is famous, powerful, and respectful; however, they don't know how much suffering I have to encounter as Chao Poh Guan. May I give you an example of the King? Some people may think that he has a very happy life, but actually he is suffering more than us as a person, the higher he is on the tree, the more wind he will face. The more windy, the more we have to know someone's tricks so that we can still survive but at the same time we are still the same person.

(DS CPG)

This suggests the weight of responsibility attached to the role and, as a result of some evidence of objection to his role, DS CPG has to protect his power and credibility from anyone who could spoil his reputation. For instance, he would remind the locals and general tourists to think twice about the information they receive about the festival and if possible they should also consult with him as well as other community members to check that the information is trustworthy. There has also been the phenomenon of some people claiming to be a medium of some sorts, so that DS CPG has to protect his reputation as most of these spiritual mediums normally seek money from those who believe in superstition, whereas he would give information freely when possible because his practice as a spiritual medium is carried out for the benefit of the community, not for himself.

This is a governing strategy, as you can imagine that if he [the royal spirit] is in communion with everyone, such as with Poh Saen and Nang Tiem, this may affect the way I work because I will be unable to command the team... the result is that no one listens to one another. ...In this case, the royal spirit will be in communion with Chao Poh Guan only; therefore, Chao Mae Nang Tiem and all Poh Saen(s) have to listen to my words.

His [the royal spirit's] target [of doing this festival] is not the tourists, but he is protecting the culture and the leadership here. A number of tourists do not have any impact on my practice: whether they come less, more or none, I will still keep this going because it is about spirit and culture. Our main factor is not from outside because we do not follow the mainstream, but follow our spirits and culture.

Therefore, the strength will be different. As you can see, I live a normal life without money, what do you think that bring people to come to pay respect to me?

(DS CPG)

The above analysis has shown the considerable significance of spiritual or religious leaders to the DS community in relation to decision making for the direction of heritage documentation. The power of decision making regarding heritage activities is thus dependent on the local representatives such as this group of people rather than the local or central government. The weaknesses of these two local museums include dependency on key individuals, lack of resources such as a budget for consistent maintenance, and suitable professional keeper of the museums. This is inevitably reflected in their long-term management, in which the leaders have to seek appropriate solutions for the community since their leadership status will also change in time. Management of community heritage would need a more explicit structure beyond volunteer management and dependency on spiritual leaders.

It could be arguable that, in terms of sustainability, by comparing these two museums, the Phi Ta Khon museum and DS GPG's 'Cultural Hall for DS Locality and Tradition', the latter seems to have better opportunity to survive for the long term if conditions required for maintenance – including staffing issues, succession planning and access issues – are resolved. This is because the museum does not depend on inconsistent government funding or small donations such as given at the Phi Ta Khon museum. Moreover, the status of DS CPG's museum could be maintained as long as community members retain their faith in the spiritual leader. Consequently, in the future when one of DS CPG's sons is assigned to replace him, he could be the next inherited museum keeper and could further develop his father's project. It is suggested that there is a system for succession in that the royal spirits will chose the next leader and, provided he is willing and able to take on the role, the museum could continue. However, it may be worth considering putting in place a proper organisational management scheme so that the museum could not only exist for a longer time but also could be livelier and maintain its usefulness for both the DS community and the general public.

7.8.4 COLLABORATION WITH EXTERNAL BODIES

In terms of obtaining collaboration with external bodies, the DS community is similar to the TM case, especially in gaining academic and technical support from academics or educational professionals. As for the case of the DS community, which has been famous and

recognised by the general public for its annual festivals for a number of decades, its reputation has also attracted local academic researchers from various fields. One of these is RTNA, who was well recognised amongst DS community members since she had been engaging in research related to the DS community for a long period of time. Recently, she received research funding and decided to spend it on a project relating to DS CPG's private museum in which she worked alongside DS CPG to support the idea for the museum's content and design. Additionally, her reputation went back many years to when the Phi Ta Khon museum was established, as she was also the main person to take responsibility for the exhibitions inside the museum, which was requested by the collaborative local government.

*Um... the main person was the lecturer RTNA from LRU University. Besides her, there were local government authorities, group of Poh Saens, and the DS locals that helped with arranging activities.*²²³

(DS CPG)

Actually, the responsible person hasn't been identified, but for the last refurbishment, I think that the LRU University team was responsible for the content. ...The person who was hired for the project which included building refurbishment and content probably contacted the university team to look after the content for them.

(DS ABB)

Another type of collaboration was between the Pone Chai Temple and the Thai Tourism Authority along with the DS local government, which has already been discussed elsewhere in the chapter called Motivation (see pages 137 – 139). The discussion highlighted the result of the mismatch of expectation about the museum content that had a continuous impact on the temple afterwards, since the museum was completed and handed over to the temple, including in relation to the areas of content, staff and funding. This type of collaboration was considered problematic in terms of ownership in that the locals did not have as loud a voice in relation to their museum as they wanted.

²²³ 'help' in this sense presumably meant that his project was agreed by other stakeholders rather than the provision of funding support – researcher's note.

Moreover, the impact on staff had also resulted in friendship-based collaboration between the temple and the local educational unit or NFE which provided support for volunteers during staff recruitment (see discussion in previous paragraphs, pages 242 – 245). As previously discussed, the analysis suggested that the ideal curator should have knowledge about heritage management in order to appreciate the job and fully engage with the museum collections effectively, whilst the volunteers from the NFE could help with extra jobs such as providing information to the tourists during the high season – as DS GFT was keen to do.

It is clear that collaboration with an academic has been central to the establishment of both museums; however, a number of problems have evidenced themselves. Moreover, other types of collaboration could have provided more benefits for the community if mutual agreement amongst different groups of stakeholders had occurred before the projects started, and volunteers could help with extra tasks besides the main museum curation.

7.8.5 SUSTAINABILITY OF INTANGIBLE HERITAGE

In terms of the DS community, the museums are not so much protecting and communicating tangible as intangible heritage, of which the performance itself could be considered the archive (as discussed by Jeanette Bastian), but there is a perception that it is at risk.

However, what I'm most concerned is that the changing of tradition. For instance, the preservation of the Phi Ta Khon tradition, which normally lasts three days, Thursday and Friday are the gathering days that are normally attractive only to the old people, who would participate in the events, whereas young people are rarely seen to help. These young people normally appear at the celebrating day. Therefore, what I'm worried about is that it will be only old people who preserve our tradition while young people are gradually disappearing. This will deteriorate our tradition through time.

(DS SML)

The museums could be seen as one mitigation; education is another issue relevant to sustainability of the DS community heritage – besides leadership and the insufficiency of repository management – since there is evidence of concern over community identity gradually changing from its traditional ways of practice. Some interviewees even suggested a solution to maintain community traditions for a longer period of time via introducing a

curriculum of local studies focusing on the DS tradition, which should be designed by the DS district educational unit and applied with the old school curriculum. This would educate local students regarding their own tradition and culture so that they had a mutual understanding of their hometown and could transfer appropriate messages about their tradition and culture to outsiders. The need to propose a curriculum focusing on local studies had been pointed out by one of the interviewees, who was a member of the DS community, which implied that community members were concerned about the risk of knowledge deficiency relating to local tradition and culture and felt that it required safeguarding, such as by putting in place a relevant curriculum.

First, the seniors will be good models for the younger people to perform the Phi Ta Khon in order to preserve traditional ways of performing with the aim to entertain not coerce the audience. ...However, my concern as I mentioned before is that there are three days of the festival and, for example, there is a ceremony called Burg Phra Uppakut [welcoming the Uppakut avatar to protect the festival] that may be changed and the gathering day, which is only attractive to the old people. ...Regarding the Burg Phra Uppakut ceremony, I have concern about the changes of ritual practices as well as misinterpretation of the audience since some people may think that Phra Uppakut is a stone. As I'm a moderator for the Phi Ta Khon museum, I frequently heard many questions about this ceremony such as after the third try to find a stone [in the river] why would the stone be called Phra Uppakut? I think that a person who can explain this should...Actually, I think this kind of story should be included in the educational curriculum similar to what has been done in the North, and then this curriculum should be applied in any type of schools such as public schools, Non-formal Educational office or healthcare college. As a result, all children who grow up in the community will have a mutual understanding about their tradition and background of the community such as history of the town and history of the Phi Ta Khon performance.

(DS SML)

Interview data also shows that it was not only the community members such as DS SML who had a sense of that local traditions and culture were gradually being lost and required urgent safeguarding, even an outsider such as DS TAN shared the same concern.

...Yes, because personally I think children or young people only think of entertainment. If we don't provide information to them, they won't know about it and when they grow up ...I think if the older generation all pass away, there will be no one to do it. ...I think ...it should be the local authority because it is unlikely to rely on central government. I think that if local people create a curriculum such as a subject related to learning about local culture, this should be a good solution.

(DS TAN)

In relation to the fear of identity loss, DS SML had reported his concern for the religious aspect – in relation to the Boon Luang part of the same event – that only older members of the community tended to participate in the ceremony whilst most young people appeared to neglect it, and he was worried that the religious nature of this event would be forgotten by future generations. This concern was related to the intangible heritage of communicating local traditions to the younger generations in order to safeguard the continuity of practice.

DS SML had an idea for including local studies in a curriculum for the local schools in the DS district even though his recommendation to the regional education office had been ignored for a number of years.

This project has been proposed to the sheriff, actually many sheriffs already and this is the fourth sheriff to whom I have proposed the same project; nonetheless, they never presented it further. I used to propose it to the regional education office as well but there was no reaction to that. ...The top authority does not think about it. The old people who preserve the tradition gradually pass away; why don't they invite these old people for a group discussion to create a curriculum together? This is worrisome.

...

(DS SML)

Furthermore, DS ABB had been collecting relevant photographs, specifically of material preparation and ceremonial preparatory processes that were mostly completed by groups of elderly people.

The third day is the day devoted to listening to 13 chapters of Mahachat Sermon while the Phi Ta Khon performance is limited only to the former two days of the event.

There is a traditional belief that if anyone can endure listening to all chapters of the sermon they are believed to meet the future Buddha, Maitreya; however, if you ever notice on that day there are normally elderly people attending the sermon and you rarely see young people joining in. Many things have changed and this has raised my concern. Nevertheless, I'm not worried about artistic skills [for making the Phi Ta Khon masks and costumes] because they have been transmitted from generation to generation. For example, my son and my grandson have been learning from seeing teacher TIN making the masks and they could practise their skills along observing us doing it. My grandson has been painting and repainting this mask four or five times already. Therefore, I don't really have a concern about the intellectual designs of the masks because the children have grown up with it. However, my concern is more towards the change of tradition and culture of our community in that cultural roots are gradually disappearing.

(DS SML)

Although the interviewees did not articulate the reason why the younger generations were less attracted to participating in the religious activities of the festival, observational data could provide an implication of this ignorant behaviour: that the preparatory processes seemed to require special delicate skills and level of patience to complete each element, e.g. producing 1000 carved wooden lotus flowers and listening to the great teaching sermon for a whole day, due to the belief that people would experience a healthy reincarnation if they participated in the preparation of these elements for religious worship.

This section has discussed the following sustainability issues of the DS community case study: 1) funding, 2) staffing, 3) leadership, 4) collaboration with external bodies, and 5) sustainability of intangible heritage.

CASE STUDY 4: GAL

7.9 INTERVIEWEES

GAL MON, female, co-founder of GAL

GAL NBA, male, a monk who used to participate in GAL's mobile exhibition on the temple theme and donated some of the photographs in the GAL collection

GAL NUI, male, an ex-committee member of the SR provincial cultural association

GAL SOM, male, a retired government officer who lived in the city of SR

GAL DSW, female, the owner of a small home-stay hotel in SR city centre

(See more details about them as well as other interviewees from each case study in the Methodology chapter, pages 84 – 89.)

7.10 SUSTAINABILITY IDENTIFIED FROM THE INTERVIEWS

7.10.1 Stakeholder context

7.10.2 Working manual and guidance

COMMUNITY CONTEXT

The last case to be discussed in terms of sustainability issues is GAL, a gallery of old photographs located in the city of SR. It is necessary to emphasise that the nature of this case is clearly different from the other studied cases, especially in relation to its structure and background of establishment, even though the motivation behind its existence was to preserve the surrounding communities' valuable heritage for the next generation, which appeared to be an idea shared by all the case studies. The GAL has recently closed down, which was confirmed in December 2015 from its social media channel. The researcher sent a short message to GAL MON, the key informant for this research case study, to identify the reasons for this, but the answer was not clear, although there was a sense of frustration in her message which implied insufficient support for issues such as budgets and human resources. The fact that the GAL had proved unsustainable in the form in which it was studied means that it provides very valuable data for analysis of sustainability issues – could the failure have been predicted?

7.10.1 STAKEHOLDER CONTEXT

As mentioned previously, the three main people who ran the GAL came from a non-profit organisational (NGO) background, according to the interviews. Their style of working contrasted with the expectations of the funding body, which was a city council familiar with the bureaucratic working style of set office hours, whereas the GAL team required fieldwork to produce publications relevant to local history. Therefore, the conflict inherent in this situation had made the GAL staff feel uncomfortable and slowed down their work.

I insisted to them that I really couldn't do this job [working office hours twice a week – researcher's note] and they were very disappointed by me saying that to them. The head of that office was very upset by me and this is the reason for us working with difficulty.

(GAL MON)

Although GAL may be represented as a gallery of old photographs, this work was similar to that of an exhibition, while the working team took more seriously their job of conducting historical research, in which sometimes they used the old photographs that they had as the primary resource to trace the origin of the histories that they were interested in investigating. Before the GAL was closed down, it had been in business for seven years and three months, according to information retrieved from the organisation's Facebook page on 28 December 2015. However, the SR Samosorn Association, the GAL's founding institution, had previously been involved with collecting historical stories and publishing a journal to relate stories about SR province in the past since approximately 2001.

The GAL working team was keen on working with the grassroots communities and the team members were benefited by their background as NGO staff, which helped them to build and expand their community connections within and outside SR province. Therefore, through all the years before and during GAL's existence, the team had built up and expanded their connection with the local people and they were appreciated by the locals who trusted their research on historical aspects of their communities. These connections with the local communities were a source of strength; however, it seems that they were not sufficient to overcome other management problems.

The organisation's discontinuation in its previous form has indicated valuable lessons to be learned by other communities in Thailand in general or in the Isan area. Whilst it was in business, GAL staff were battling between the ideal of the jobs they were keen to carry out and the requirement of the tasks that they were asked to complete by the main sponsor which authorised the annual GAL budget. It was understood from the interviews and observation that the approach used to establish the GAL was perceived by GAL staff to be problematic from the beginning because it was significantly involved with the exigencies of political power.

As discussed in the 'Motivation' chapter, a mismatch between the GAL's aims and funding body were apparent from the outset. The GAL was awarded the space to exhibit old photographs from one former provincial governor who had a particular interest in cultural aspects and liked the idea proposed by GAL at that time. However, relying on government agency turned out to be problematic for GAL because other provincial governors who came to the post did not necessarily want to devote support to this matter, as the end product was often intangible and slow according to the judgement of the central government during the period that they were in power.

Actually, they planned to let this building [of GAL] to earn more income because the next-door building is also owned by them and is now let. As I said before, the situation of the GAL is entirely based on the vision of each chief executive. For instance, the city council used to give financial support to the GAL for 270,000 THB and it was reduced to 120,000 for the following year. The provincial governor who signed to approve the establishment of the GAL had been relocated to another province seven days after the GAL was opened.

(GAL MON)

Perhaps, in the case of GAL, the motivation behind its organisation was different from the TM and DS cases because the background that drove GAL to begin the project was not simply to preserve old photographs or ancient written manuscripts and historic tools or to preserve traditions, but rather to influence and directly challenge the government sector – which could be compared with the activist type of community archives found in the West.

7.10.2 WORKING MANUAL AND GUIDANCE

Although the GAL seemed to be the most formally established organisation by comparison with the other three case studies, the organisation's internal management was found to be fairly relaxed. The main caretaker of the GAL, hereafter GAL PHN, had flexible working hours because at the same time she had to conduct fieldwork research with the two other members of the organisation, GAL MON and JIB, who were also her direct supervisors and the founders of GAL. Whenever she had to go on field trips, she had to temporarily close the GAL because there were no substitute staff to look after the organisation for her and the team. It seems that the GAL team did not establish a proper policy or regulations relating to practice and service of the GAL at the beginning; rather, they waited until any challenges occurred and then sought solutions to them. For example, it was not until an unfortunate incident that the GAL staff started to keep records of all requests made to the GAL.

There used to be a copyright issue in the past here because we were not careful about the purposes of using photographs when a university lecture borrowed a photograph from us and [they] claimed that [they] interviewed a person in the photograph, who was the owner of the image. Therefore, when the owner learned about the publication of the image, [they] told me that [they] were very unhappy to see that. As a result of this situation, we started to use a written request form for any request made to the GAL because the letter will specify the purpose of photograph usage and will prevent the users from misusing the photographs. Moreover, we will have evidence to tell the photograph owners about the use of their photographs.

(GAL MON)

Bureaucratic issues also delayed developmental processes of the organisation because the GAL team had to ask for approval from their government sponsor.

It is a practice guideline [for working], not a proper regulation because we can't write regulations by ourselves as they need to be approved from the committee of three institutions according to the original agreement, which include SR Samosorn Association [researcher's note – founding institution of GAL], city council, and Rajamangala University. This structure is problematic for us regarding flexibility.

(GAL MON)

The unsuccessful model of GAL as an organisation is an unfortunate phenomenon for a community archive in Thailand. However, it is probably worth thinking of suitable ways in which GAL could have survived, had the situation been resolved earlier. The solution is very much associated with management aspects such as encouraging full participation at the beginning of the project in order to allow the team to make their objectives clear to other stakeholders, in this case a committee mainly comprised of government officers. Moreover, perhaps because the GAL's team had a background motivated by activism, their persistence in setting up the GAL in order to counterbalance the power of the local government and some politicians appeared to result in their failure. Even though the relationship between GAL as an organisation and the communities seemed to be positive, the communities did not identify closely with the organisation. It could be that, although GAL was intended to represent the communities, it was not part of those communities, and this was perhaps because the organisation was situated in the government space not in a community space – unlike the cases of the TM and DS communities. This was identified as an issue by GAL MON in the interview:

I sometimes feel discouraged and want to move out from here [GAL location] to relocate at a temple. I'm tired of encounters with a group of people who are trying to change this building for business to make incomes.

(GAL MON)

The next quotation shows that her desire for GAL to be located in a temple space may have changed the organisation's situation, even though she had a reason not to move away from where it was located which was driven by political factors between the government sector and marginalised communities.

Nonetheless, I also think that here [GAL] is the power of community as it's a community/social space. My friends encouraged me to stay here because GAL is the place to present the power of citizens and it will act as demonstrating the existence of this power. There are only this place and the Green Market that are representatives of public space for local people. This is the reason for us to exist.

(GAL MON)

One of the outstanding characteristics discovered from the GAL case study is that the organisation seemed to be the one that was most involved in networking and collaboration – especially with local groups – in order to support its stability:

However, I can ensure that, in this vicinity, local people are still the good backup for us so we aren't interfered with much from external power because they know that they may encounter conflicts with the local people.

(GAL MON)

These people were said to be friends with the SR Samosorn Association that predated the GAL and the firm relationship between the locals and GAL was also reported to refer back to the period of GAL JIB's father, who had left his legacy for the SR Samosorn as well as the GAL staff to approach the communities more easily.

We had to rely on JIB's family because his family has been beloved by local people long since his ancestors. The family isn't only recognised within SR but spread around the province, including many students of JIB's father. ...At the beginning, when people didn't know about [the] SR Samosorn Association nor story telling from photographs wasn't recognised, we had to mention his name [JIB's father] as a pass.

(GAL MON)

Therefore, GAL MON was optimistic about their status amongst the locals in opposition to the local politicians, as mentioned:

You [interviewer/researcher] may not understand much about this context but you may imagine that we could get in and out of the houses of these people while local politicians would normally visit them with presents to gain access. Our personal connection is stronger than theirs.²²⁴

(GAL MON)

²²⁴ 'these people' and 'them' refer to the retired government officers – especially politicians – who still gain respect from local people due to their previous status in the former governmental rank – researcher's note

Even though the failure to stay open may indicate the unsustainability of the organisation, the data convinces us that this is due to management, which became the main obstacle for the team to continue their work. According to a personal conversation with GAL MON following the closure of the gallery, she was in touch with the Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn Anthropology Centre (SAC) to create a virtual database of the resources that they had instead of the physical exhibition space, which means that their work is still carrying on but their strategies have been changed to be better suited to their working styles and to require no attachment to mainstream organisations. This could be a new chapter in their work, one which would possibly be perceived as more genuine by the communities they are serving.

The idea of taking technology on board in the hope of supporting the work of community-based organisations seemed to be a way forward for some organisations that may potentially encounter difficulties related to physical space such as identified from the GAL case study. However, this option will require strong support from collaborative groups of active technical as well as content experts to be sustainable.²²⁵

This section has discussed the following areas of sustainability derived from the analysis findings: 1) stakeholder context, and 2) working manual and guidance.

7.11 CONCLUSION

The areas of sustainability in relation to community self-documentation and heritage management discussed in this chapter reveal strengths and weaknesses in the four case studies, as shown in the below table.

Table 3: Aspects of sustainability of self-documenting communities listed by case study

Case study	Strength	Weakness
MC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community support • Relationship with other local bodies • Sustainability of tangible and intangible heritage 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Funding • Lack of planning

²²⁵ An example of a community resource in Thailand which is already utilising digital methods is the Buddhadasa Indapanno Archives — BiA (<http://www.bia.or.th/en/>)

TM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community bonding • Leadership • Funding • Advocacy and collaboration with external bodies • Adapt to change (sustainability of intangible heritage) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of planning
DS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Funding (DS CPG's museum) • Staffing (DS CPG's museum, intangible heritage) • Leadership • Collaboration with external bodies (content) • Sustainability of intangible heritage 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Funding (PTK museum) • Staffing (PTK museum) • Maintenance • Collaboration with external bodies (mismatch of expectation)
GAL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stakeholder context (mismatch of expectation) • Funding (allocated) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Funding (insufficient) • Working manual and guidance

The table shows key points regarding sustainability, related to each case study. Even though the presentation of those key points is based on the context of an individual case study, it is noticeable that some of the findings are shared across the case studies, whilst others may be completely different due to the specific context of the communities or organisations. For instance, GAL is a more formally established organisation by comparison with the other three case studies, which are based in the communities they represent. Therefore, the associated findings have shown different perspectives from the others.

The findings show that at least two out of the four case studies appeared to rely heavily on their community leaders. These are TM and DS communities. Since the value of gratitude was widely accepted and respected by the community members of both communities, therefore, they tended to have faith and trust in their community's key figures. Most of time, the key figures were found to be spiritual leaders; this is perhaps unsurprising in a context where the majority of community members held a belief in Buddhism and ancestral spirits. Therefore, any potential initiatives in community heritage activities were mainly originated or driven by these key figures and the future of the activities or projects was normally

dependent on the existence of these key figures, whilst their belief results in the greater involvement of community members.

Analysis of the interview data suggests that the MC Cultural Home – which was mainly directed by an individual collector, MC SRS, to preserve collections of local antiquities – was found to be the least sustainable in comparison with the other case studies since it has shown signs of deterioration in various ways, such as, firstly, it was established by an individual collector and, secondly, the community itself seems to have less awareness of its value for them. Although the latter may only be an assumption from the small amount of data received from the fieldwork, which excluded the opinions of the majority of community members, this data may be sufficient to draw some conclusions regarding community members' neglect for their own heritage which has been preserved by one person who hopes to retain the community's historical stories through his own collections.

Furthermore, the present analysis has shown a substantial association between the key figures in communities and their roles as heritage representatives as well as the originators of heritage activities within the communities. The instance of this type of influence could be illustrated by MC SRS, the individual collector of the MC Cultural Home; TM PKW, TM CLD, and TM SOS of the TM community; and DS CPG, the spiritual leader of the DS community, and DS ABB, the abbot of the Pone Chai temple and supervisor for the Phi Ta Khon museum of the DS community. As discussed in this chapter and elsewhere in the chapter regarding 'motivation', these key individuals were notable for organising heritage activities and they attempted to encourage the communities to maintain their initiatives. However, this chapter has discussed the risk of over-dependency on the leaders, which can be further analysed through a comparison between the key leaders of the TM and DS communities. Whereas TM PKW of the TM community had faced a scandal and been forced to leave without being able to properly plan his replacement, the role of DS CPG, on the other hand, seemed to be more sustainable in terms of the replacement person, who would be the next spiritual leader once DS CPG retired. This assumption was based on the evidence of the strong commitment to the spiritual leadership role, which had been passed down from generation to generation for more than 450 years. DS CPG asserted that previous leaders had faith in their role and ensured they conducted themselves morally so that community members would continue to have trust in them, and this would enhance community cohesion in the present and in the future. It is, however, less clear what would happen should the leader

be unsuitable for the role, or be forced to leave in an unplanned manner, as had occurred with TM PKW.

The other two case studies, MC Cultural Home and GAL, did not have equivalent issues of leadership dependency since the former was entirely managed by a single collector, MC SRS, whilst the latter was managed by a group who wanted to act on behalf of the local communities.

Based on the findings, all case studies apparently had issues with funding. Some appeared to lack both core and maintenance funds, such as in the case of MC Cultural Home; some may have had support at the beginning from external bodies but lack ongoing funding, such as TM and DS; and some may have had a better funding situation, receiving both core and maintenance funds, such as GAL (although the annual budgets were inconsistent), but had encountered other challenges instead, especially the mismatched expectations between the funding body and the GAL team.

Amongst all the case studies, the TM community seemed to be more fortunate in the sense of community resources, which benefited from the firm cooperation of community members. This included donations to establish the community fund and the well-organised system of fund allocation run by an elected community committee.

The two museums of the DS community had different funding situations. The private museum owned by the spiritual leader, DS CPG, seemed to be less at risk in terms of financial issues than the Phi Ta Khon museum at the Pone Chai temple, where the main responsible person, DS ABB, found himself in hardship, relying on donations to maintain the museum as the income was scarcely enough to cover the bills. Thus, only simple cleaning could be organised by the temple novices whilst the more essential work regarding maintenance of museum content and infrastructure had to be dependent on external support. However, the private museum's income was dependent on the ongoing support of DS CPG, and neither resource had alternative funding streams.

The difficulties that GAL encountered were mostly related to their dependence on the funding body for the annual fund they were supposed to receive; however, conflicts had led to the closing down of GAL as a physical gallery. The example of GAL could possibly be a

good lesson for other Thai communities wishing to create similar kinds of organisation in the future.

Elsewhere, collaboration with external bodies seemed to play an important role in supporting community archives. It was found that the TM and DS communities had cooperation from external bodies, especially academic researchers, who could usually support the communities with research funding, which became advantageous for the communities' heritage initiatives. Moreover, both parties would gain benefits from the increase in heritage project promotion both academically and socially.

To summarise, the results show that each case study has strengths and weaknesses in relation to sustainability issues that emerged from the research data. The issue of funding was relevant in all cases, in which some cases may have seen it as a challenge whilst others had community support to mitigate the concern of community members. It was also found that all cases had challenges relating to maintenance issues including lack of planning and staffing. As for the strength aspects, it could be suggested that the interwoven relationship of tangible and intangible heritage seemed promising for the future of community heritage, such as in the case of DS community where both museums use the tangible heritage to represent the intangible heritage of the community tradition. Moreover, collaboration with internal and external bodies could possibly help the communities in the funding and content of the community archives; nevertheless, it is suggested that this would be beneficial for the communities only if the agenda is based on mutual agreement of all stakeholders. Furthermore, leadership appeared to be significant for sustainability for some communities.

In conclusion, whether community archives in a Thai context would be sustainable or not notably depends on the motivations for their establishment and existence; therefore, each case presents different strengths and weakness in relation to sustainability concerns. Nevertheless, the findings suggest one main factor that is shared amongst all case studies: the highly dependency on key individuals. It is also necessary to note that the dependency on leadership is most noticeable from communities with characteristics of strong support for religious and spiritual institutes, as exemplified by the TM and DS communities, whereas MC and GAL have a different context; thus, their level of leadership dependency is less than the former two. However, these four case studies appear to share another aspect that is relevant to leadership dependency, and which significantly supplements it; that is, 'trust' in the key

individuals, be they the religious and spiritual leaders (TM and DS), individual collector (MC), or the organisation representing the community (GAL). Moreover, ‘trust’ influences sustainability of the community archives, as trust or faith in the key individuals could change and there could be the risk of a community discontinuing its support for the heritage initiatives established by the key individuals.

Another issue with sustainability relates to funding. The findings have shown that each case study presents both strengths and weaknesses in terms of funding. It is clear that the individual collector, MC SRS, seems the least sustainable, which is due to lack of financial support from other sources rather than his own budget for maintaining the collections. On the other hand, DS CPG’s collection, which is also a private collection the same as MC SRS’s and also solely relies on his own budget (except the one-off research funding provided by a university researcher with whom he works), is likely to be in a better situation due to strong support from DS community members because of his prestige in the leading spiritual roles. Another community-based archive in the DS community, which is the PTK museum, reveals very different results for the risk of long-term maintenance of the museum; and this is mainly because of the conflict of interest amongst the stakeholders from the beginning. The last-mentioned case study, GAL, has a very different situation from the others in terms of financial support due to the context of its establishment. Nevertheless, other factors, especially the conflict of interest, have significant impacts on long-term maintenance issues and consequently caused its termination. It is also notable that maintenance issues including lack of planning and staff apparently remain challenges shared by all the case studies.

Again, the intertwining relationship between tangible and intangible heritage, which has been mentioned before in a previous chapter regarding provenance, is clearly presented in this chapter to imply that intangible heritage is likely to be more sustainable than tangible heritage; for instance, the ceremonies could be re-created or re-invented, such as in the case of TM SOS, whereas old-fashioned tools and equipment could deteriorate over time without constant maintenance, such as in the case of TM CLD’s collections at his former school. Having said that, the two aspects of heritage are entwined, as has already been discussed in the provenance chapter, and this seems to be advantageous for the Thai communities as long as the intangible heritage is carried on by members of the communities since the tangible heritage could be preserved at the same time. This can be illustrated by the knowledge of textile making transferred from the Isan ancestors and which is still used by Isan people for

different purposes, including clothes to wear for traditional and invented traditions and wrapping the palmleaf manuscripts, as seen from the case of the MC and TM communities. Moreover, in the case of the DS community, tangible heritage including items used for decoration during the Boon Luang and the Phi Ta Khon tradition is also part of the overall ceremonies (intangible heritage) preserved by DS community members. Although not as noticeable as other cases, for GAL this type of relationship is implied by the work that the GAL team pursue; that is, to use the photographs collected from communities for publications based on stories associated with the photographs to raise the voices of those marginal communities.

The area of collaboration with external bodies has shown to be good benefits for the case study communities, especially when the initiatives are defined by the communities – hence they can negotiate the most advantageous results for themselves, such as the collaboration of university teams with the TM community and a university researcher with DS CPG. The GAL case happens to be a lesson learned about the unsustainability of community archives in Thailand because of the risks that began during the motivation phase and which resulted in long-term maintenance issues which meant that the project had to be closed down eventually. Nevertheless, it has been found that personal connections were very important and useful for the GAL team to complete their work, including connections with other government organisations in the cultural sector, such as when they learned about the practice of keeping a record of service requests to prevent the copyright issue encountered before. It is implied that, if GAL is situated in a space belonging to the communities with which they have a connection, its position might be different. The last case to mention is MC Cultural Home, which is owned and solely managed by the individual collector, MC SRS, which reveals that his connection with other organisations is more for advocacy. Hence, his collections gained fewer benefits from collaboration with the external bodies, unlike the case of the spiritual leader DS CPG's private archives.

Lastly, the findings have demonstrated that sustainability importantly depends on the mutual agreement of all stakeholders and leadership is significant for some communities.

CHAPTER 8

CONCLUSION

8.1 INTRODUCTION

The conclusions of this study are drawn from the research findings which were discussed in chapters 5, 6, and 7 regarding Motivation, Provenance and Sustainability respectively. The findings of the study were derived from the main research question. Therefore, this chapter will begin by recapping the research question with a summary of the research findings. The next section will concentrate on the implications of the study especially for a Thai context; this will be followed by a discussion of the limitations of the study and recommendations for future research.

8.2 RESEARCH QUESTION AND FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

In Chapter 1, Introduction, the research question was discussed as part of the statement of the problem and its importance for this particular research project. This chapter will refer back to areas of discussion raised there, especially in relation to concepts of community.

Furthermore, in terms of community archive perspectives, the conclusion associates the findings with the Western literature on community archives already mentioned in Chapter 3, The Community Archives Movement, as well as in Chapter 4, Methodology, especially the primary frameworks used to support the selection of case studies, including Newman and Gilliland.²²⁶

Before proceeding to the next discussion, it is necessary to restate the research question of this study:

How do Thai communities document and preserve their heritage and to what extent is the Western concept and model of community archives appropriate to a Thai context?

²²⁶ Gilliland, A.J. [2012]. *Voice, Identity, Activism (VIA): a community-centric framework for approaching archives and recordkeeping*; Newman, J. 2011. 'Sustaining Community Archives', *Aplis*, 24, pp.37-45

According to the above research question, there are two main criteria to be discussed separately, which are, firstly, ‘How do Thai communities document and preserve their heritage’ and, secondly, ‘To what extent is the Western concept and model of community archives appropriate to a Thai context?’ The researcher considered approaching the conclusion in relation to these two main areas by engaging with the latter aspect first, and then discussing the former.

First, having consulted the Western literature and frameworks discussed in chapters 3 and 4 of this thesis, it could be seen that the framework provided by Gilliland – ‘Voice, Identity, Activism (VIA): a community-centric framework for approaching archives and recordkeeping’ – identified relevant perspectives of community archives which supported the researcher in making decisions about the choice of case studies. It is worth repeating the criteria suggested by Gilliland for the VIA Framework:

- VIA-relevant communities,
- motivations for archives and recordkeeping,
- community characteristics,
- documentation characteristics, and
- policy considerations.²²⁷

All of these criteria provided the researcher with a fundamental comprehension of the community archives concept at a theoretical level.

Second, Newman’s framework enabled the researcher to make a closer consideration of community archives at the practical level, especially in terms of their long-term management. Newman suggested the importance of three main aspects for sustaining community archives:

- archival records themselves and the evidence they contain,
- custodial structure around the archives, and
- community connection.²²⁸

²²⁷ Gilliland, A.J. [2012]. *Voice, Identity, Activism (VIA): a community-centric framework for approaching archives and recordkeeping*

²²⁸ Newman, J. 2011. 'Sustaining Community Archives', *Aplis*, 24, p.45

Having established a fundamental understanding about community archives as perceived by Western scholarship from these two frameworks in particular before analysis of fieldwork data, the researcher could generate the results of this study, especially in relation to the question ‘How do Thai communities document and preserve their heritage’, which will be the focus of the next section.

8.3 AREAS OF RESEARCH FINDINGS

This section will provide a synthesis of the findings discussed in chapters 5, 6, and 7 – Motivation, Provenance and Sustainability respectively. The selected areas of the findings discussed in this section are considered to be significant for the concluding remarks.

8.3.1 RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE MAINSTREAM ORGANISATIONS AND COMMUNITY ARCHIVES

Although Gilliland’s VIA model identifies both inward- and outward-facing motivations in relation to community archives, the literature review suggested that the main motivation for founding community archives in the West was the perception of absence within traditional archives and mainstream heritage organisations, a perception termed ‘symbolic annihilation’ by Michelle Caswell, Marika Cifor and Mario Ramirez.²²⁹ By contrast, the fieldwork findings suggested that the communities studied in Thailand had less interest in filling in a gap in the holdings of mainstream archives and heritage organisations.²³⁰ In contrast to the Western context of community archives as described in the literature, the Thai communities seemed to be more concerned about loss or forgetting of heritage in both tangible and intangible aspects, which is not specifically identified as a motivation by Gilliland, except in relation to repatriation, recovery, and obviation of appropriation and the ‘general consideration’ of ‘Changes in attitudes toward the past and the present resulting from generational and

²²⁹ Caswell, M., M. Cifor, and M.H. Ramirez. 2016. "To Suddenly Discover Yourself Existing": Uncovering the Impact of Community Archives', *American Archivist*, 79, pp.56-81

²³⁰ Harris, V. 1998. 'Some thoughts on the relationship between the national archives and community archives', *S.A.Archives Journal*, 40, pp.36-37; Flinn, A. 2007. 'Community Histories, Community Archives: Some Opportunities and Challenges', *Journal of the Society of Archivists*, 28, pp.151-176; Flinn, A. 2008. 'Archives and their communities: serving the people', *Comma*, 2008, pp.157-168; Flinn, A., M. Stevens, and E. Shepherd. 2009. 'Whose memories, whose archives? Independent community archives, autonomy and the mainstream', *Archival Science*, 9, pp.71-86; Flinn, A. 2010. "An attack on professionalism and scholarship?": Democratising Archives and the Production of Knowledge', *Ariadne: A Web & Print Magazine of Internet Issues for Librarians & Information Specialists*, 30; McKemmish, S., S. Faulkhead, and L. and Russell. 2011. 'Distrust in the archive: Reconciling records', *Archival Science*, 11, pp.211-239; Nakata, M. 2012. 'Indigenous memory, forgetting and the archives', *Archives & Manuscripts*, 40, pp.98-105; Newman, J. 2012. 'Revisiting Archive Collections: Developing Models for Participatory Cataloguing', *Journal of the Society of Archivists*, 33, pp.57-73

attitudinal shifts, socio-political gains, and cultural assimilation'.²³¹ This perspective of loss was apparently shared by all of the case studies.

Similarities in relation to having an awareness of the reduction in appreciation of local traditions and disappearance of practices, especially by the younger generations, emerged from all the case studies via slightly different circumstances, unsurprisingly, because all cases were different in themselves.

First, the MC Cultural Home, managed by an individual collector, MC SRS, was similar to the case of the TM community to some extent, in that the collections in both cases were initiated by and the responsibility of senior male figures who were similar in age (60 – 70 years old), which implied that in their lifespan they had seen changes to their communities, especially from the arrival of modern facilities ranging from basic infrastructure to communicative technology that was influenced by past governmental policies, as already discussed in Chapter 2, Context of Thailand and Isan provinces. These curators of community collections, namely MC SRS, TM PKW and TM CLD, all had experience of living temporarily outside of their own communities, especially in the capital Bangkok, during their young adulthood; and they were all influenced by a sense of marginalisation in terms of both socio-economic and cultural aspects. Therefore, having returned to their communities, they began to collect items thought to represent their communities; for example, MC SRS was sensitive to the reaction of his friends in Bangkok to being told about his hometown, which was unknown to them. This had greatly impacted his decision to relocate to his hometown after graduation and he later gradually started to collect artefacts that represented the Isan ethnic identities in the areas local to the town. Similar to MC SRS, TM PKW went to Bangkok and drew a comparison between living conditions in the capital and in his hometown, seeing the latter as having fewer conveniences. Therefore, upon returning to his hometown he began to engage in development projects by leading the village fellows to request new infrastructure to promote equality of lifestyles.

Considering their ages, it is possible that both had a shared memory of the nation's development during the 1960s – 1980s when rapid modernisation was driven by

²³¹ Gilliland, A.J. [2012]. *Voice, Identity, Activism (VIA): a community-centric framework for approaching archives and recordkeeping*, (p.6)

governmental policies, especially after the first National Economic and Social Development Plan (NESDP) 1961, and there was a high demand for resources and labour from the Isan region, as discussed in Chapter 2. Moreover, as they had lived through significant changes in Thai society, especially in terms of the impact on the Isan region, they were aware of the decline of heritage appreciation by the younger generations within their communities. Believing that they themselves should shoulder the responsibilities for heritage conservation, they became leaders in their own right, simply by beginning to collect the unwanted old artefacts from the villagers, such as in the case of MC SRS and TM CLD, and initiating relevant heritage projects such as the project to learn Isan manuscript languages led by TM PKW.

In terms of the DS community, the wave of tourism promotion had resulted in significant consequences for the DS community members' views regarding their heritage, especially that centred around the community's annual festival, the Boon Luang Grand Ceremony and Celebration of the Phi Ta Khon. It would be reasonable to conclude that all interviewees in this case study had expressed their concern about heritage loss from different viewpoints, depending on their position in relation to the community's heritage. The view they shared in common was in relation to the impact of tourism promotion. Moreover, it was found that local government and stakeholders in tourism promotion had played a significant role in leading the direction of heritage preservation within the DS community.

Since tourism seems to have been the influential factor in relation to the DS community, unlike the MC Cultural Home and TM community discussed above, it is apparent that heritage management of the DS community had been affected by different circumstances. An exception was the case of DS ABB, who expressed his initial desire to have a temple museum to present the old-fashioned artefacts from the DS locality before his plan was overtaken by the government's plan for the Phi Ta Khon museum – had the abbot's plan been carried out, the DS community might have been more similar to the two cases already discussed. The PTK museum of the Pone Chai Temple was established by support from the governmental sector intended to preserve and promote the Phi Ta Khon feature that they believed to be the main iconic feature of the DS community. On the other hand, members of the community – including key persons such as the community spiritual leader and the abbot, namely DS CPG and DS ABB respectively – neither actually supported the assertive tourism agenda nor felt any particular need to preserve this feature, as they compared it with the Heet 12 Cong 14,

12-month principal custom, which they believed to be a more important and better representation of the DS community lifestyles. Because of their different opinions on which heritage aspect should be selected to represent the DS community and should be preserved, the study has shown the community's efforts at self-documentation as being in some ways comparable to the 'Western' model – the symbolic annihilation suggested by Caswell, as discussed before, that a community does not find itself represented on its own terms. Nevertheless, in the case of the DS community, instead of creating their own repository, the DS ABB had chosen to supplement an existing one, the PTK museum; and even the private museum of DS CPG was not set up in 'opposition' to the existing PTK museum.

Finally, GAL was an organisation that was not directly part of the communities it represented. In other words, although the key personnel had started to collaborate prior to the involvement of external agencies, the GAL was established and co-partnered with a government organisation and a public university for funding and facilities support from both partnered organisations. Nevertheless, the aim of GAL was mainly to promote and disseminate knowledge of diversity within SR's larger society. Perhaps the 'loss' of heritage perceived by the GAL team was more about losing the mainstream acknowledgement of heritage or identity loss rather than the feeling of nostalgia which could be found more strongly from other case studies. It was clear that the GAL team decided which community and which heritage they should represent; nevertheless, community members were likely to put their trust in the GAL team to present their heritage on their behalf, since the GAL team were keen in their use of an anthropological approach and avoided taking advantage of the research subjects or communities, as discussed previously in the Provenance chapter. Therefore, the work of GAL consisted of an attempt to save both tangible (photographs from communities) and intangible (local lifestyles and practices through oral history and anthropological research) heritage.

Having reported the findings that emerged from the fieldwork data analysis regarding the perception of heritage loss, it is appropriate to return to the literature-based findings to make a comparison. Whereas a range of Western scholars have emphasised the tension between the mainstream or traditional archives and the community archives, as earlier mentioned, findings from a Thai context show something rather different, in that – even though Isan culture has been marginalised by the project of creating an integrated 'Thai identity', which had resulted in language loss in particular – the Isan communities were found to be more

concerned about the loss of heritage from within their own communities rather than an attempt to fill in a gap in mainstream archives, or countering acts of ‘symbolic annihilation’. Part of the reason may be because, in a Thai context, the communities were not aware of the mainstream archives and the public archives did not have regulations covering community heritage, as is made clear in the discussion regarding the scope of the Thai National Archives Act 2013 in Chapter 1. Moreover, under the law, the mainstream museums also had a scope that was limited to registered endangered objects, as discussed in MC SRS’s case of collecting the unearthed pottery in the Provenance chapter. Therefore, it was found from the study that a closer relationship existed between educational institutions and communities than with the government’s heritage institutions. This relationship had formed in such a way because the universities had to undertake research in relation to community engagement; therefore, the university researchers normally approached the communities and sometimes, if they progressed well together, the communities might well start to approach the university researchers – as in the case of the collaborative projects between the TM community and the local university research team. It was not possible from the research evidence to identify how the government’s cultural organisations would approach the communities; nevertheless, the findings suggested that the support from the government sector seemed to come in the form of research funding. Academics and formal organisations were more likely to get access to the funds than the locals were, since getting public funds was implied to be difficult, as was discussed in the case of MC SRS in the Sustainability chapter. This type of relationship was implied elsewhere in the study as well: for instance, the local university researchers from the case studies of TM and DS communities had received research funds from public funding in order to support the studies with both communities. Another example was in the case of GAL, where the GAL team would act as an intermediary between the communities and government agencies since GAL would collect and disseminate the communities’ stories to be acknowledged by the SR society as a whole. Therefore, the strategy applied by GAL was to receive financial support from public funds to conduct research related to community heritage, with which the communities seemed to be satisfied in terms of the GAL team’s strategy as they apparently trusted GAL to represent their heritage on their behalf.

To conclude this section, in contrast to the findings from Western literature which have found that community archives were mostly driven by activist desire that both resulted from and in some ways created a gap between mainstream and community archives, communities in a Thai context presented no significant relationship between the two parties at all. The Thai

communities rather focused on saving their heritage from devaluation and neglect than on trying to fill the gap in the mainstream collections, as normally found in the relationship between mainstream and community archives suggested by the Western literature or the so-called ‘symbolic annihilation’ introduced by Caswell, as mentioned before. The community archivists define their activities in relation to their community in the first instance, making them primarily community organisers and advocates within their community, rather than on acting on its behalf with external agencies, which is only a secondary role. This suggests that Western research might also want to reconsider more internal factors to see whether these might be equally important in community archives.

8.3.2 LEADERSHIP

Leadership has not been the focus of discussion in Western literature, even though some scholars may address the importance of individuals who normally acted as archivists for community archives in Western community archives;²³² this appeared to be different to the context of Thai communities presented in case studies from this research. The main difference was that discussion of the literature shows some focus on identifying ways in which community archives can collaborate with professional archivists, whereas this particular point was different in Thai communities, which did not engage with the traditional archives but had their own, which were mainly originated by key figures in the communities. Therefore, in Thai communities, the key figures were normally religious, spiritual or dedicated local scholars or historians such as MC SRS (an individual collector of the MC Cultural Home), TM PKW (ex-abbot of TM community’s THA temple), TM SOS (abbot of the TM forest temple), TM CLD (retired teacher from the TM community), DS CPG (the spiritual leader of the DS community), DS ABB (abbot of Pone Chai Temple in the DS community) and GAL MON (co-founder of GAL, the gallery). Although there are individual differences that must be recognised, there is one common desire shared by these community figures that was discussed in the Motivation chapter: that they perceived the loss of heritage and wanted to preserve that heritage for the younger generations to learn about the past and inherited culture and tradition of their communities. Further investigation also suggested that the way they perceived the loss and wished to preserve the heritage was because they were influenced by different experiences from their community fellows, such as through their own

²³² Gilliland, A.J. [2012]. *Voice, Identity, Activism (VIA): a community-centric framework for approaching archives and recordkeeping*; Newman, J. 2011. 'Sustaining Community Archives', *Aplis*, 24, pp.37-45

position as the spiritual leader (the monks and spiritual mediums) or by gaining an education and living life in a more modern environment that had an impact on their perception of locality. Therefore, they had a desire to preserve the traditional lifestyles that they had experienced before, with the fear of loss due to the influence of modernisation. The key figures from all the case studies seemed to generally gain trust from the community members, and hence receive good cooperation on the heritage initiatives they established due to their respected status within the communities they represented (e.g. MC SRS, TM PKW, TM CLD, DS CPG, and GAL MON and the team). Therefore, this research shows that members of communities relied heavily on their leaders, such that the study also revealed the risk to community archives from leadership dependency, such as happened with the TM community for the projects led by TM PKW, which came to a standstill when he left the temple. Even though some communities may have a positive opinion towards community fellows acting as volunteers, the cooperation from these volunteers would only be driven by the dedication and commitment of the leaders. Perhaps Thai communities could consider a suggestion from Western scholars in balancing the work between the main archivists of the community archives, who were the key figures of heritage initiatives in a Thai context, and the volunteers in order to sustain the community archives.²³³

8.3.3 TANGIBLE AND INTANGIBLE HERITAGE

Referring to the discussion in Chapter 1 regarding the definition of heritage (pages 6 - 7), it is noticeable that the definitions provided in the Western literature seem to be constructed in terms of a binary discussion between the tangible and intangible heritage. Moreover, previous studies suggested that fewer Western scholars considered intangible heritage to be part of archival practices. The most prominent scholar who has suggested that intangible heritage could be considered as equivalent to material records and archives is Bastian, as she proposed in her article on observing the 'Play mas' carnival.²³⁴ Even though the concept of community archives has been gradually developing since the present research project started, and Western scholars have moved towards collaborative archival practices such as 'participatory provenance' or 'societal provenance', the intangible aspect of heritage documentation

²³³ Newman, J. 2011. 'Sustaining Community Archives', *Aplis*, 24, pp.37-45; Slaper, T.F., and T.J. Hall. 2011. 'The Triple Bottom Line: What Is It and How Does It Work?', *Indiana Business Review*, 86, pp.4-8

²³⁴ Bastian, J.A. 2009. 'Play mas': carnival in the archives and the archives in carnival: records and community identity in the US Virgin Islands', *Archival Science*, 9, pp.113-125

remains less widely discussed amongst them,²³⁵ except by Bastian, as mentioned above, and Ketelaar, although his focus on intangible records is more associated with digital records rather than intangible heritage in cultural and traditional terms.²³⁶ Moreover, there has been much interest in oral history to preserve the intangible heritage but this seems to be a form of heritage preservation that ‘fixes’ the heritage, making it into a ‘record’, rather than allowing it to evolve.²³⁷

The study findings revealed that tangible and intangible heritage had such strong connections that it was impossible to identify a single aspect of tangible or intangible heritage when it came to the terms of archival practices. Therefore, separating the two makes no sense in relation to the heritage practices of Thai communities. Discussion regarding Western community archives seemed to focus on either tangible collections or intangible features of community archives;²³⁸ however, the relationship between archival practices and the tangible and intangible heritage as the same domain may require further investigation. This observation was drawn from the study findings, which showed significant links between the two aspects of heritage. For instance, the use of textiles in Isan culture demonstrated the intersection of tangible and intangible aspects fairly well, as could be seen in the case of MC SRS of the MC Cultural Home.

Inspired by his childhood experience spent with his grandmother as well as the gaining of knowledge and awareness about value of local textiles from a renowned scholar in the field of textile preservation, MC SRS began to collect and preserve textiles – especially silk sarongs – from villages within or near to his hometown, MC district. He regarded these both as representing local identity generally in terms of their designs and also as having specific

²³⁵ Nesmith, T. 2006. 'The concept of societal provenance and records of nineteenth-century Aboriginal-European relations in Western Canada: Implications for archival theory and practice', *Archival Science*, 6, pp.351-360; Rydz, M. 2010. *Participatory archiving: exploring a collaborative approach to Aboriginal societal provenance* ([n.p.]: University of Manitoba)

²³⁶ Ketelaar, E. 2012. 'Cultivating archives: meanings and identities', *Archival Science*, 12, pp.19-33

²³⁷ Chenier, E. 2009. 'Hidden from Historians: Preserving Lesbian Oral History in Canada', *Archivaria*, 68, pp.247-269; Nathan, D. May 2013. 'Access and accessibility at ELAR, a social networking archive for endangered languages documentation', in Mark Turin, Claire Wheeler and Eleanor Wilkinson (ed.) *Oral Literature in the Digital Age: Archiving Orality and Connecting with Communities* (Cambridge: Open Book), pp. 21-40

²³⁸ Stevens, M., A. Flinn, and E. Shepherd. 2010. 'New frameworks for community engagement in the archive sector: from handing over to handing on', *International Journal of Heritage Studies*, 16, pp. 59-76; Bastian, J.A. 2009. 'Play mas': carnival in the archives and the archives in carnival: records and community identity in the US Virgin Islands', *Archival Science*, 9, pp.113-125

representative properties in relation to the deceased owners of particular examples. He personally liked the designs of silk textiles and he had skills relating to fabric patterns; therefore, he had developed new designs for silk textiles based on knowledge of traditional designs observed from the local textiles including those kept in his collections, and he collaborated with the local tailors to produce fine designs, some of which were given awards and shown at the MC Cultural Home. This example of MC SRS's practice shows that the tangible heritage (local silk textiles) was an archival material of the communities that MC SRS represented, as it was produced by members of those communities, and the textiles generated the intangible heritage in relation to the knowledge transferred from MC SRS's grandmother to his generation and the next generations via the newly invented designs based on traditional knowledge, and the designs became further archival materials of the communities. This example maps to the 'cultivating archives' suggested by Ketelaar.²³⁹

Similarly, the case of the TM community also shows a strong connection between the two aspects. This could be identified by the example of the invented ceremony initiated by TM SOS, abbot of the forest temple. It was clear that, although he might have collected the palmleaf manuscripts due to his own interest in traditional literacy with the intention of preserving them so far as possible, evidence from the findings also showed that he intended to sustain the intangible heritage based on knowledge gained from the tangible heritage. In other words, he, as one of the few members of the TM community able to read the palmleaf manuscripts, had transferred knowledge from the manuscripts in relation to the 3rd month ceremony which he invented based on an analysis of data obtained from the collected manuscripts from different locations. Moreover, that specific ceremony required the cooperation of the community members to produce many items as the elements required to fulfil the ceremony; and it was confirmed that the community showed their 'buy-in' (acceptance) of the new tradition by their active participation because they had faith in the monk as their religious leader. It could be seen from this example of the TM community that tangible and intangible heritage had a productive relationship in preserving and informing an ongoing tradition.

Comparable to the TM community, the procedures of the Boon Luang and Phi Ta Khon Festival of the DS community revealed similar results. This example perhaps conformed well

²³⁹ Ketelaar, E. 2012. 'Cultivating archives: meanings and identities', *Archival Science*, 12, pp.19-33

with Bastian's suggestion for festival as an archive ('Play mas') since this particular festival consisted of four small, inter-related ceremonies altogether. Each of them represented beliefs or customs that the DS community had long practised and preserved since their ancestral period. As for this particular festival, the tangible aspect would be the items for decoration that form parts of the ceremonies both for religious and spiritual purposes as well as the Phi Ta Khon feature itself (and which are represented in the temple museum), whereas the intangible aspect would include the ceremonial processes of all sub-ceremonies as part of the main festival including performance styles, designs of costume and masks of the Phi Ta Khon feature. The procedures of the preparation and the overall three-day festival were also part of the intangible heritage from the traditional and cultural points of view. The key informants of this case study, namely DS CPG, the spiritual leader, and DS ABB, the abbot of Pone Chai Temple, were the main figures who tried to preserve these two aspects of community heritage through their own actions. Firstly, DS CPG was himself part of the community archival process since he had been preserving the community traditions via his responsibility as the spiritual leader who encompassed essential elements of tangible and intangible heritage to maintain the local tradition and culture. Secondly, DS ABB reported that he had an ongoing project of collecting relevant photographs of the annual festival, which perhaps could be seen as community self-documentation in order to fill a gap in a more (if not entirely) mainstream organisation for the missing information at the exhibition displayed at the PTK museum. This is also an example of the intersection between tangible and intangible – the intangible is documented in tangible form.

In the case of GAL, the relationship between the two aspects of heritage was not as clear as in the other case studies since the communities were represented through the point of view of the GAL's team. Nevertheless, the study showed that photographs and oral histories collected, preserved and disseminated by GAL had increased the opportunities for the hidden voices of the communities to be widely heard by the population of SR province through GAL publications and activities that engaged with the local communities. These included the research conducted with the silversmiths discussed in the chapter entitled Provenance as part of the research project funded by the SR city council to provide content for the organisation's annual report, as the GAL team were the researchers for this project.

Therefore, this study suggests these observations: that in Thai community archives tangible and intangible heritage are intertwined and both form important elements in community

memory and identity, which the community sees as valuable to preserve and pass on to future generations.

8.3.4 COMMUNITY HERITAGE SPACE

The literature review suggests that the concept of ‘space’ in relation to community archives has not been greatly explored in Western literature. Potential issues associated with space and place are listed by Gilliland but have not been discussed in great detail. Space and place play an important part in community archives because Thai communities appeared to be defined by both actual physical locations and their place of origin (e.g. Laos). Moreover, it was also found that the community archive has an integral link to a particular place (e.g. the temple), such as in the case of TM and DS communities. The concept of community was discussed in Chapter 2 and community as space was amongst the given definitions by scholars in related fields of study.²⁴⁰ Nevertheless, as was mentioned in the discussion, the concept of community is a fluid one and, in terms of that related to community archives, especially in a Thai context, it seems that it was more about the constructed meaning of belonging, than locality or territory related.²⁴¹ Bastian adopted the concept of ‘collective memory’ to stimulate archival professionals to reconsider the scope of archival practices beyond the mainstream archival responsibilities in order to represent more of the ‘house of memory’, the term adopted by the ICA president Jean-Pierre Wallot in 1999, with the aim that voices from different communities within a society could be heard, thus increasing social inclusion.²⁴² In order to achieve such an objective, it has been argued that archival professionals should also reconsider the concept of provenance: the archival principle of which the creation and creator of records are the signification. For this reason as well as Bastian’s enthusiastic impulse of thinking beyond the provenance of traditional records, she suggested to incorporate ‘provenance as place’, which “implies both a physical community and an imagined community where the act of creation is tied to the actual space as well as to all the other

²⁴⁰ Cohen, A.P. 2007. *The symbolic construction of community*. (London: Routledge); Dicks, B. 2000. *Heritage, place and community* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press)

²⁴¹ Whitehead, A. 2009. 'Collective memory: Maurice Halbwachs and collective memory', in Whitehead, A. (ed.) *Memory* (London: Routledge), pp.125-138

²⁴² Bastian, J.A. 2003 - 2004. 'In a "House of Memory": Discovering the Provenance of Place', *Archival Issues*, 28: 1, pp.9-19; Bastian, J.A. 2009. 'Play mas': carnival in the archives and the archives in carnival: records and community identity in the US Virgin Islands', *Archival Science*, 9, pp.113-125; Bastian, J.A. 2013. 'The records of memory, the archives of identity: Celebrations, texts and archival sensibilities', *Archival Science*, 13, pp.121-131; Bastian, J.A. 2014. 'Documenting communities through the lens of collective memory', in Daniel, D., and A. Levi (eds.) *Identity Palimpsests: Archiving Ethnicity in the U.S. and Canada* (Sacramento, CA, USA: Litwin Books), pp.15-33

creators who have engaged within the space”.²⁴³ In addition to Bastian, Ketelaar also mentioned ‘archives as social spaces’ for sharing memory, custody, and trust as well as for preservation of records.²⁴⁴ As will be shown, this idea is very relevant for what was found in Thailand. In another article written by Bastian, she expanded the scope of provenance to cover not only space but the landscape since it could be linked to constructed meanings given by the people who had memories of that landscape.²⁴⁵ It will be suggested that some of the religious rituals observed in this study seem to have an integral relationship with the landscape but that others are evidently more portable.

It could be understood from literature such as the above mentioned that the archive as space or landscape or house of memory was a suggestion from Western scholarship to understand traditional memory practices as having archival qualities the same as the textual archives dominant in the traditional archival collections. Moreover, the Western community archives suggested in the literature (i.e. community archives for ethnicity, faith, sexuality or gender) were mostly intentionally established for the purposes of social inclusion and democratisation and managed independently from the mainstream archives. This type of community archives in the Western establishment could be considered as the constructed space, whereas findings of the study revealed a different result of the more natural-setting space that community members appeared to perceive as a common space for sharing memory amongst them; and it was found that religious and spiritual institutions played a significant role for the community’s collective memory. It is worth noting that, whilst some Western community archives pay little heed to their location, other than in terms of practicality and ownership, others such as the Herstory archives in New York pay such careful attention to their constructed space that the volunteers are expected to live in the space and it is designed as a welcoming space for users.²⁴⁶

In two of the case studies, namely TM and DS communities, the lifestyles of community members were driven by religion, faith and local beliefs such as the Heet 12 Cong 14 customary and spiritual rites. In the case of the TM community, although three temples were

²⁴³ Bastian, J.A. 2003 - 2004. 'In a "House of Memory": Discovering the Provenance of Place', *Archival Issues*, 28: 1, pp.9-19 (16)

²⁴⁴ Ketelaar, E. 2008. 'Archives as Spaces of Memory', *Journal of the Society of Archivists*, 29, pp.9-27

²⁴⁵ Bastian, J.A. 2014. 'Records, Memory and Space: Locating Archives in the Landscape', *Public History Review*, 21, pp.45-69 (57)

²⁴⁶ The Lesbian Herstory Archives. 2015. *The Lesbian Herstory Archives: volunteer* (New York: LHEF)

located inside a small-scale community at village level, community members engaged in religious activities undertaken all year round at the THA temple, which was the centre and common space for the gathering of TM community members. The temple was also the location of community archive collections including palmleaf manuscripts (as well as the wrapping textiles) and some old artefacts were also kept at the temple. These collections were perceived by the community as representations of their identity: for instance, the palmleaf manuscripts showed the male intellectual literary dimension of cultural development within the community; the wrapping textiles for the palmleaf manuscripts showed the female inherited skills of weaving; and the old artefacts represented history related to the community. These collections clearly represented the community's collective memory of its history and of the villagers' ancestors. Even into the present day, the temple remained the common space for community members to participate, not only for religious purposes but also for general civil activities such as regular monthly meetings or traditional practices on special days, e.g. the annual Songkran Festival or the Thai Traditional New Year, for carrying out respecting rituals for the elders of the community. The strong relationship between the community unit and temple institution was not a new phenomenon for a Thai context, as was already discussed in Chapter 1: temple and monks were always almost part of a community unit in the past because the monks were the primary teachers before formal school systems were enforced in Thai educational development.

In addition temples, which have traditionally existed in every Thai community, there was also evidence of recently constructed spaces for heritage activities such as 'a (community) learning centre', the term which appeared to be popular amongst Isan communities including the TM community, where the project of building a learning centre was initiated by TM PKW but which had been suspended due to his having to leave the temple. Although the establishment plan had been postponed until the next leader could be assigned, it is worth noting that TM PKW, who was a monk and leader of the project, as well as other members of the TM community, agreed to build the centre inside the THA temple grounds – presumably because the temple could provide enough space for social and heritage activities, and perhaps because it was the most comfortable space for the community members where they felt a sense of belonging. Also noticeable was that a rural community's trend of trying to build a community learning centre was likely to have been informed by experience outside of their rural setting. In rural communities, the temples represented an informal educational unit, yet they were marginalised by past governmental policies, whereas the learning centre concept

was influenced by Western concepts of learning at cultural institutions such as local museums. Evidence for this was provided in the Motivation chapter as well as the Methodology chapter, which mentioned the SAC database of local museums in Thailand as part of the initial sources for the selection of the case studies. This example of popularity in building community learning centres within a Thai context driven mainly by the donation of community members – such as found in the case of the TM community – could imply the insufficiency of availability of heritage management support from the Thai government sector. This could be related back to the perception of ‘loss’ and the desire to preserve the disappearing heritage already discussed in section 1, Relationship between the mainstream organisations and community archives. On the other hand, this trend of having a community learning centre could demonstrate good practice in relation to the Thai community archives in terms of an independent community heritage institution or a community archive by means of ownership of decision making about the resources and collections to be preserved and presented in the space agreed by all to be the best place for a repository, and by providing learning benefits to the community members.

At the DS community, it was again revealed from the study that there was an intersection between the space related to spiritual aspects and the space related to heritage activities, such as the house of DS CPG, the community spiritual leader, which was both the site of religious rituals and a museum; the shrines of royal spirits, and the Sri Song Rak Stupa (stupa of friendship symbol) between Thailand and Laos, which was highly respected by the community members as well as those who came from outside of the community but had faith in the royal spirits, as people from both nations shared the same memory of their ancestors. The observation also suggested that the tradition conserved by the community greatly involved natural settings such as the reserved woodland and river running through the community. This observational note showed that community members identified their own territories and were attempting to maintain their inherited space as well as avoiding intervention from the government system for territorial determination; therefore, the community had their own system to associate memory to the landscape and its preservation, as suggested by Bastian.²⁴⁷

²⁴⁷ Bastian, J.A. 2014. 'Records, Memory and Space: Locating Archives in the Landscape', *Public History Review*, 21, pp.45-69

Another observation on the space issue in the case of the DS community related to two museums located within the community. The first was the PTK museum of Pone Chai Temple, established by government funds and later handed over to the temple. The second was a private museum of DS CPG. Based on the findings, the first museum was not perceived by the community as a community archive because the main aim of establishment was to satisfy tourists not the community members. The organisation had conflict in its status as it seemed to be primarily planned for community ownership yet the overall plan was not agreed with the community representative, who was also the representative of the owner of the space where it was planned to establish the museum (the abbot and Pone Chai temple respectively). The consequences of the ill-planning were the mismatch of the ideal and actual content displayed at the museum, which the abbot thought was incomplete, and improvement of the content was required with mutual agreement amongst the community's stakeholders. Therefore, this research has shown that, in Thai communities, community archives which are accepted by the community as being a good representation of their heritage tend to be established in community spaces, although the GAL case study is an exception to this, as the space is separated from the communities being represented, which was disadvantageous for the organisation in that it had to close down, as already mentioned in the Sustainability chapter. This emphasises the importance of linking space, place and archive in ways touched on by some Western scholarship but has not been fully developed.

8.3.5 PROVENANCE CONCEPT

As mentioned in Chapter 2, Context of Thailand and Isan provinces, Isan ethnicity consists of a range of ethnic groups that have mainly Isan or Thai-Lao ethnicity throughout the region. Amongst the four case studies, the MC Cultural Home and TM community represent obvious Isan-speaking populations; therefore, the discussion in this section draws primarily on the findings based on these two sites.

It has already been mentioned that the concept of provenance is the main principle of archival theory in the Western world; therefore, the present research sought to explore issues of provenance in the case studies of Thai communities in order to identify whether there was a concept of provenance in a non-Western context and, if so, how it was conceptualised.

According to the findings, the Thai communities were less focused on the issues of unique creation/ownership implied by concepts of authorship and provenance found in Western

discourse. Explanation for this could be associated with the Thai communities' basis in oral culture more than textual communication since past times. Therefore, evidence of written records was rarely found within the Thai communities. Although knowledge passed from oral tradition could later be recorded, mainly in the form of the palmleaf manuscripts by the monks or literate men living in a community, this content that was passed on from generation to generation did not belong to the specific author or creator who created the manuscripts; it belonged to any members who shared the same belief, faith or practice. Most written records found in the case-studied communities were palmleaf manuscripts whose content included medicine, sermon, folklore, and music, etc. Such content belonged to people who shared a common belief, which in this case could refer to Isan people, as the Isan ethnic group shared the same culture and traditions. It was noticeable that the inherited manuscripts found in communities were not taken as any one person's heritage but the community's, although they were mainly kept in the community temples, and the community members were more interested in the content than in the creators of those manuscripts, since it was likely to be impossible to search for an owner of such inherited content. Although it might be possible to research the identity of the scribe, who might likely be a monk or local scholar, he did not own the content, as it was passed down through generations. Therefore, it was notable that inherited knowledge within Isan communities was representative of not only members of a specific community but could also represent the Isan ethnicity in the region that also shared similar tradition and culture, which could be referred to as an 'ethnic provenance'.²⁴⁸ This concept, identified by Wurl, seems very pertinent to the archives of the Isan community, where, as discussed above, place of settlement seems less significant to their identity than the imagined community of Isan ethnicity and shared memories of ancestral migration. The concept of ethnic provenance seems relevant to understanding the study findings such as for TM SOS, whose case could demonstrate the ethnic provenance practice quite clearly. TM SOS was an abbot of the TM forest temple and he had a particular interest in local culture including keen skills in palmleaf manuscript literacy. In addition to his regular habit of inscribing new palmleaf manuscripts, both to conserve the skills and to preserve the content by copying it to the new manuscripts, he also collected them and other local artefacts such as carved wooden sculptures. He exchanged knowledge of the ceremony with the Lao people as well as consulting the manuscripts he collected from there, collecting items used in the

²⁴⁸ Wurl, J. 2005. 'Ethnicity as Provenance: In Search of Values and Principles for Documenting the Immigrant Experience', 29:1, pp.65-76

ceremony he found in Laos and bringing them back to teach TM villagers to recreate the ceremony. In this sense, the monk had collected the archival items (palmleaf manuscripts) that represented the Isan ethnicity as well as his community at the same time. The findings suggested that his practice of collecting items from Laos showed that he recognised the similarities in both cultures, his Isan ethnicity and Laos origin, especially in terms of a shared culture in terms of the religion and local belief in Buddhist lifestyles.

A similar example may be found in the case of MC Cultural Home. The individual collector, MC SRS, was interested in local textiles, as mentioned earlier, and he was keen to collect these textiles from anywhere he visited, especially local villages within the MC district. He broke the local taboo on preserving deceased people's textiles because he did not want to lose the textiles during cremation. His practice showed that he did not limit his collecting activities to his own town, but looked for items from people of Isan ethnicity from further afield because they shared the same culture.

It could be seen from this study that ethnic provenance plays a significant part in heritage documentation in Thai communities, especially in the Isan region, where there is diversity of ethnicity and the majority share similar cultures across the borders with neighbouring countries. Therefore, to draw the line of cultural and traditional origin is nearly an impossibility, although recognition of where and how the materials have been collected and collated may help to distinguish one community from another for the purpose of intellectual ownership.

8.3.6 RESILIENCY OF COMMUNITY ARCHIVES

In relation to the discussion in the previous section regarding the ethnic provenance which seemed to be relevant to the Isan communities, this research has also shown that the ability to adapt to change appeared to be a critical element for the sustainability of the community heritage activities. The invented and mutable traditions seen at MC (invented ceremonies and invented silk designs), TM (new 3rd month ceremony by TM SOS) and DS (new designs for masks) show that the archive is dynamic, and this quality of adaptation of tradition is supported by the work of Eric Hobsbawm on invented traditions theory.²⁴⁹ Moreover, in the

²⁴⁹ Hobsbawm, E. 1983. 'Introduction: inventing traditions', in Hobsbawm, Eric and Ranger, Terence (ed.) *The invention of tradition* (Cambridge: Press Syndicate of the University of Cambridge), pp.1-14

VIA framework, Gilliland identified the “ability to grow and change” as a sign of resiliency.²⁵⁰ As has already been discussed in Chapter 3, the review of literature on the community archives movement showed that part of the growth of community archives, for example in the case of the UK, was due to the government’s policy to provide financial resources to enable the initiation or support of heritage projects. The UK government has provided a large amount of lottery funds to support a number of nationwide projects: 40,000 heritage projects have been funded since 1994.²⁵¹ In contrast, the situation in Thailand is very different from the UK and other Western countries in terms of the availability of funding sources for the heritage sector, in that they are comparatively insufficient or inaccessible since communities and the heritage sector do not have a direct relationship except via local government, who sometimes lacked a thoughtful plan for community engagement projects, such as happened to the PTK museum in the DS community. Comparison between these two contexts reveals both strengths and weaknesses in the Thai approach.

In comparison to many of the Western community archives, the heritage initiatives of Thai communities were fundamentally driven by the need of a community’s key figures to prevent the loss of its heritage through time and they did not rely on or anticipate support from external bodies or government funds before starting their projects. Even though the study attempted to examine to what extent this type of decision would have an impact on the sustainability of the community’s heritage projects due to the influence of Western literature (such as Stevens, Flinn, Shepherd and Newman)²⁵², the findings revealed that the community’s key figures as well as other community members did not seem to emphasise or raise concerns about future sustainability. This is possibly because professional archivists are more concerned about long-term sustainability than communities, and perhaps archival professionals need to revise their views on archival temporality to recognise that some resources may only be needed for a shorter term, and that future users can make a decision about whether they still want them for themselves. It is also worth noting that, although Gilliland’s VIA framework suggests that community archives might exhibit the same concern for long-term preservation as is found in mainstream archives, which can be seen from these

²⁵⁰ Gilliland, A.J. [2012]. *Voice, Identity, Activism (VIA): a community-centric framework for approaching archives and recordkeeping*, (p.4)

²⁵¹ Heritage Lottery Fund. 2016. *About us* (London: Heritage Lottery Fund)

²⁵² Stevens, M., A. Flinn, and E. Shepherd. 2010. 'New frameworks for community engagement in the archive sector: from handing over to handing on', *International Journal of Heritage Studies*, 16, pp.59-76; Newman, J. 2011. 'Sustaining Community Archives', *Aplis*, 24, pp.37-45

research case studies, one should understand that the reasons for the communities to have less concern for the future may not be the same as already shown in this study for the Thai communities.

The heritage projects and activities initiated by the TM community represented outstanding characteristics of strong bonding amongst members of the community leading to a firmly voluntary system, self-funded via a village foundation of which the community had been managing for development of the community in a variety of ways; that the funds were solely based on donation showed that the community had strong desire to achieve the goal for safeguarding, appreciating, and making use of their inherited collections and preserving tradition.²⁵³ Nevertheless, community members such as that of TM PKW and TM CLD of TM community seemed relaxed about this area of sustainability concerns. It seemed that they gave more priority to the initiatives than on planning for long-term preservation. It might be reasonable to explain this by associating their perception with their religious belief, which may influence the way they lived their lives, including their view on heritage projects. As was discussed in relation to the definition of community in Chapter 1, there was a particular idea to identify a community by comparing it to a Buddhist teaching principle, the Four Noble Truths, suggested by Somerville²⁵⁴. This particular rule would remind the Thai Buddhists about the ‘impermanence’ which appeared to play a significant role in the lives of community members, as could be seen clearly from the case studies of this research, especially in the case of the TM community in the way they perceived the future of their heritage projects. For instance, the projects initiated by TM PKW had to be postponed due to the disgrace linked to him; it was reported by TM CLD that the projects would be continued but according to a loose plan depending on available funding and on finding a future potential leader for the project. The study results showed that the community members held to the impermanence rule in that they seemed to be quite relaxed in their attitude and did not worry, even though the next project leader could not be identified. This particular attitude could possibly be explained using the study by Julia Cassaniti regarding the relationship between Buddhism and positive psychology in that ‘philosophical awareness of change’ plays an

²⁵³ In relation to the community concept discussed by Brown, D.L., and K.A. Schafft. 2011. *Rural people and community in the 21st century: resilience and transformation* (Cambridge: Policy Press)

²⁵⁴ Somerville, P. 2011. *Understanding community: politics, policy and practice* (Bristol: The Policy Press, University of Bristol), p.240

important part in the healthy life of the Thai people since it helps them to think and act positively.²⁵⁵

In terms of heritage projects such as illustrated by the case of the TM community, the awareness of change or ‘anicca’ had resulted in the idea of ‘freeing oneself from attachment’, which might explain the particular attitude taken to community heritage regarding the openness to change and the relaxed attitude already identified. The risk, however, is that in the meantime the objects may have deteriorated or crucial information about them might be lost. This might not be a problem if a community did not have a view for long-term preservation. However, it could be seen from the case of TM SOS – the forest monk who collected, used, re-created, and preserved the palmleaf manuscripts – that they were valuable for him and the community; therefore, the physical value of the manuscripts was significant.

It can be seen from this study that the cultural context affects community archiving practices in Thailand. However, it is probably worth noting that, although Gilliland’s VIA framework seems generally applicable, its frame of reference is marginalised communities and, although Isan communities can be so described and were chosen for study for this reason, issues associated with marginalisation were less evident from the interviewees’ responses than might have been anticipated.

8.4 IMPLICATIONS OF THE STUDY

The main findings of this study have been addressed in the previous section, which provided the conclusion in relation to the first part of the research question for the methods of self-documentation by Thai communities. The focus of this section corresponds to the last part of the research question regarding the extent to which the community archives movement model is suitable for a Thai context.

Discussion from the previous section shows that there are sufficient commonalities between the Western literature and the research findings for each to inform the other, and that the findings from the four case studies have offered some alternative perspectives which can further develop the mainstream professionals’ understanding of the range, variety and

²⁵⁵ Cassaniti, J.L. 2014. 'Buddhism and Positive Psychology', in Kim-Prieto, C. (ed.) *Religion and Spirituality Across Cultures* (Dordrecht: Springer Netherlands), p.116

meaning of archival practices in a community context. It is possible to understand the Thai studies as ‘community archives’, but care should be taken not to assume that they share all the same features as Western examples of the genre. Moreover, particular resonances in literature dealing with less ‘Westernised’ examples (such as Bastian’s archives as place and space) have been suggested by the Western scholarship; nevertheless, it should be re-emphasised that care should be taken not to create an artificial binary of ‘Western’ and ‘non-Western’ community archives.

The majority of community archives discussed in the Western literature seemed to be mainly driven by the uneasy situation between the conventional and community archives, especially due to the latter feeling underrepresented within the mainstream archival collections.

Therefore, the relationship between community archives and mainstream organisations in the Western context seemed to be fairly inter-related, even when the former were fiercely independent. The Western literature has enabled this research to identify the findings in the context of Thailand as having ‘archival’ characteristics. However, in Thailand, questions of whether a community archive is a ‘proper’ archive are irrelevant because the two types of institution are not seen by either as being related. This might be seen as a drawback if any community archive could not maintain the streaming funds allocated by the funding bodies; for example, GAL had to shut itself down partly because of the insufficient and unreliable funds allocated by the SR city council.

Additionally, this study has reflected the ideas of community archives in that its findings may benefit the hyper-local communities in the West, in which the likelihood for both Thai and Western communities could be the domination of a single or small group of a few individuals within the communities and that leadership dependency may be similar. Moreover, as this study has shown, the intangible heritage is very important for the Thai communities due to influences of oral tradition and religious and spiritual belief; therefore, associated ceremonies and rituals have been invented by members of the communities and passed on from generation to generation. In the light of this significant finding, Western community archive literature and activities related to intangible heritage should perhaps also recognise both the tangible and intangible heritage of local community to include folksong, crafting, dance and performance, and the centrality of memory (especially orality) to most community archive endeavours. Moreover, findings of this study also imply the importance of physical space to be crucial to community archives in Thailand including the traditionally set-up space – i.e.

temple and spiritual leader's vicinity – and the up-to-the-minute set-up space called 'learning centre', which is usually built in common space used by community members. Taking into consideration the Thai case studies, physical space could be as significant as communities in a Thai context, especially for women's, LGBT and ethnic minority archives.

If sustainability is to be measured by the durability of any heritage activities, it could be possible to conclude that the intangible heritage of the Thai community context seemed more promising than the tangible aspect. This was because, despite the agenda of modernisation, the communities have retained faith in their traditional and cultural beliefs and practices, such as in the case of the annual Boon Luang and Phi Ta Khon festival of the DS community, which was claimed to have existed for more than 450 years. Moreover, the system of donation such as that of the TM community for having a village foundation was an example of independency from any external funding bodies or being much less dependent on them if there were any, i.e. the local government funds. Furthermore, the intangible heritage had the characteristic of flexibility, making it adaptable through time; this would correspond with the definition of a community as an 'imagined community'²⁵⁶ in which community members would share memory and a sense of belonging and create the community in which they wanted to live together; and this could support the existence of the intangible heritage of communities since community archives would be flexible in time and space. An example of this flexibility of heritage could be demonstrated by the TM community's 'invented tradition' during the Songkran festival or the 3rd month ceremony, as previously mentioned. The tangible, on the other hand, seemed less likely to be sustainable for the long term in the Thai communities, unlike the attempt to safeguard records that was mainly found in the Western literature. The old-fashioned equipment and tools were mainly kept but then abandoned after the project leaders could no longer handle the collections, such as in the case of TM CLD. None of the communities visited had succeeded in establishing a learning centre or local museum to exhibit the tangible artefacts of old-fashioned tools and equipment. The main project leaders continued to insist on the heritage value of the collections, yet it seemed that improvement of collection management and financial support was needed to maintain the collections for the benefit of future generations that they wished to achieve.

²⁵⁶ Anderson, B. 2006. *Imagined communities: reflections on the origin and spread of nationalism* (London: Verso)

In order to support the Thai communities in fulfilling the heritage management gap, the analysis of this study suggested that it might be useful to adapt the ‘provenance’ model, the main archival principle of the Western world, with self-documentation of the Thai communities. Recent recommended models of provenance by Western scholars such as ‘participatory provenance’, ‘societal provenance’ and ‘ethnic provenance’ could possibly be useful for the Thai communities once they wished to deal with heritage documentation since these areas of provenance embrace social dimensions for ensuring the cohesion of society.²⁵⁷ These wider definitions of provenance are useful for understanding what is going on in Thai community archives – what the materials mean to the community. However, there is also the issue that Western experience suggests there may be a problem with ownership and rights in records if items are collected indiscriminately from groups who might define themselves as separate communities and might one day want the records back, or if the community wants to digitise the records but does not know whether they have the right to do so. Provenance is the theoretical concept that could be applicable in a Thai context to prevent and protect local intellect and identity; for instance, descriptions of creators should clearly be recorded for future reference. In terms of ‘ethnic provenance’, which was evidenced as being widely applied by the Isan communities (such as by MC SRS and TM SOS for preserving Isan local identity), recording of the origin as well as the tradition they had invented would be useful for future research on their own communities and on the Laos communities where the cross-cultural interaction happened. Although there may or may not be a conflict of culture in the future, this practice of provenance recording would possibly be useful for future research in terms of cultural studies on Isan and Laos traditions.

Furthermore, having considered the frameworks of Gilliland and Newman, which were mentioned at the beginning of this chapter, their recommendations may help to identify whether any of the more practically focused literature would be useful in practice. Gilliland stated in Policy Considerations that such considerations should include the areas of: Indigenous and other cultural protocols, Ownership, Ethics, Preservation, Description, Access, Agency, Compliance with external recordkeeping requirements, and Admissability

²⁵⁷ Wurl, J. 2005. 'Ethnicity as Provenance: In Search of Values and Principles for Documenting the Immigrant Experience', 29:1, pp.65-76; Nesmith, T. 2006. 'The concept of societal provenance and records of nineteenth-century Aboriginal-European relations in Western Canada: Implications for archival theory and practice', *Archival Science*, 6, pp.351-360; Rydz, M. 2010. *Participatory archiving: exploring a collaborative approach to Aboriginal societal provenance* ([n.p.]: University of Manitoba)

of records, whereas Newman suggested three key aspects for sustainability: Archival records themselves and the evidence they contain, Custodial structure around the archives, and Community connection, which focuses on the organisational factors or the identity aspect of the Continuum model including Governance, Funding, Skilled staff, Archivist character, Dynamism, Collaboration, and External support factors. These recommendations driven from the Western literature may or may not be appropriate for the Thai communities. Nevertheless, as per the aforementioned conclusion of the findings identified in previous paragraphs, it may be worth the Thai communities taking into consideration the provenance areas to protect ownership of their heritage and prevent any misleading or misrepresentation as well as having evidence of community intellectual property. Moreover, the Thai communities could perhaps learn from the Western archival practices for management of volunteers and the value of archival professions for maintaining archival materials as well as documenting of community heritage by applying archival principles for more sustainable conditions for the community archives. It was learned from the case studies that the Thai communities had already collaborated with the external bodies who could provide advice on the preservation of community heritage, but there was evidence of a lack of concern for the provenance principle which could potentially be useful for safeguarding the communities' heritage ownership. Moreover, it seemed that Thai communities mainly relied on donations for funding to run their heritage activities, which means that they could be considered to be sustainable in their own right as long as there is a commitment from the key individuals or members of the communities, such as in the case of the TM community's community foundation.

8.5 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

Further studies could adopt a more participatory approach and utilise wider involvement of community members to contribute to the study, such as having a focus group or anthropological approach within the community in order to gain a better understanding of the community's own priorities, their understanding of their heritage, and the impact of the community archive. Moreover, although the study found no evidence of any relationships between traditional and community archives in Thailand, this question also needs to be considered from the perspective of the traditional repositories, and also from the perspective of those external agencies with which the case study communities were already interacting. Furthermore, comparative studies between regional practices within the country and/or international practices, especially in a Southeast Asian or Asian context, might enable the communities that share similar cultural and traditional characteristics to exchange and

enhance the heritage self-documentation by their own means. Other possible questions may be to what extent digital strategies could support the heritage documentation of the Thai communities. Additionally, a longitudinal study of all four case studies could be useful to monitor change over time.

This chapter has provided an overall discussion of the research findings set out in chapters 5, 6, and 7 in line with the research question and findings of the study. The research overall has identified some key issues for understanding the motivations for creation, the nature of the holdings and the sustainability of Thai community archives. It has discussed the implications of the study of the Western community model within a Thai context, concluding that, if used sensitively, Western literature can both assist with analysis of the situation and with addressing practical issues. Finally, the thesis has recommended areas for future research.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: SELECTION OF CASE STUDIES

1. CASE STUDY SELECTION PROCEDURE

STAGE 1:

SELECTION FROM A THAI DATABASE ON LOCAL MUSEUMS

The Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn Anthropology Centre (SAC) provided a collective list of local institutions in Thailand by developing a database based on their findings, which resulted from a literature search, focus group and interviews with the local curators.²⁵⁸ This showed strong evidence of an awareness of the significance of community heritage amongst various local communities all around the country, which demonstrated that there are existent community resources, which might be relevant for the present study. Information on the website is constantly updated and there were 1299 museums, which were only physical and non-virtual, compiled in the database on the date of the first review for ‘Phase One’ (4th June 2013).²⁵⁹ Before further describing the selection processes for the case studies from the SAC database, it is necessary to mention the database structure to provide better understanding of how it was organised, as presented below.

Areas	Categories
1. Content	Local wisdom
	Archaeology
	Architecture
	Textile

²⁵⁸ Koanantakool, Paritta Chalernpow et. al. June 2004. *The research and development of local museums: phase 1, building the networks and the survey of local museums* (Bangkok: Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn Anthropology Centre); ---June 2006. *The research and development of local museums: phase 2, case studies* (Bangkok: Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn Anthropology Centre); ---June 2007. *The research and development of local museums: phase 2, establishing the local museum database* (Bangkok: Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn Anthropology Centre)

²⁵⁹ A recent review showed that there are 1340 physical museums and four online museums (updated on 6th March 2014)

	Law/penalty Natural science Medical science/public health Monastery Heritage house History Ethnic Art/performing art Life history Pottery Military/war Science and technology Postal communication Forest monk Banking and finance etc.
2. Ownership/Management	Foundation/non-profit organization Community Private School State agency Local administration Monastery
3. Region	North Northeast West East South Central
4. Province	A list of 77 provinces (see Appendix E, page 370)

STAGE 1.1:

SELECTION OF POTENTIAL CASE STUDIES FROM THE SAC DATABASE AND SERENDIPITOUSLY DISCOVERED INSTITUTIONS

1) BY REGION:

During the initial selection process (4th June 2013), the researcher selected the cases THAT focused only on those institutions located in the Northeast (Isan) region, of which there were 208 in the SAC database.



Figure 8: Map of Thailand showing the Isan region, image retrieved from <http://www.websanom.com/>, 14 June 2013

2) BY PRACTICALITY:

Since it was planned to complete ‘Phase One’ within one month, this limitation led to the exclusion of some museums which seemed to be difficult to access because of their distance from the researcher's starting point for her trip, which was her hometown in Khon Kaen province, and it was necessary that the route to each potential case be well connected. Therefore, provinces such as Kalasin, Mahasarakham, Roi-et, Surin, Yasothon, Nakhon Ratchasima, Loei and Khon Kaen were likely to be the best candidates for the latter reason.



Figure 9: Map showing potential provinces for selection of case studies, image created and adapted from Google maps

3) BY OWNERSHIP AND CONTENT:

Having narrowed down the scope of interest into region and practicality, the researcher then considered the museums by ownership (or management) and their content, as given in the SAC database. As for the ownership, the researcher ruled out state-owned ones, as they fall outside the definition of community archives, but did consider those owned by a community, monastery, foundation and non-profit organisation, and those that were privately owned and, as for the content, local wisdom and heritage house were considered respectively. For each selected field, the researcher narrowed her search to those aforementioned potential provinces in the practicality step and finalised her selection into 11 potential institutions. It is necessary to note that some of the potential institutions were serendipitously discovered outside of the data available from the SAC database, and the researcher took them into account because they fitted into the initial criteria (region and practicality) and were feasible for Phase One's field visits.

4) BY DESCRIPTION OF EACH MUSEUM:

The SAC database attempts to provide reasonable introduction to the collected institutions, which include reviews [background of each museum], gallery, brochure, video, map, exhibit layout, references, contact information and quick facts such as admission fee and year of

establishment. This became useful information for the researcher at the starting point to pin down the research case studies. The descriptions provided rich information for the researcher to decide what cases would be suitable for this research purpose based on the definition and concept of community archives provided in Chapter 3. The descriptions, unfortunately, were incomplete for the potential institutions from the above selection step; therefore, the researcher had to find them from other sources. The sources of these descriptions will be cited throughout.

At this stage, 11 cases, as listed below, had been selected as the potential case studies for 'Phase One' in July 2013:

- A - Surin City Gallery (Surin Province)
- B - Elephant Study Centre (Surin Province)
- C - Sirindhorn Art Centre (Loei Province)
- D - Tai Dam Centre of Na Pa Nad Village (Loei Province)
- E - Phi Ta Khon and Grand Ceremony of Dan Sai Community (Loei Province)
- F - Pak Moon Local Intellectual Village Centre (Ubon Ratchathani Province)
- G - Sing Tha Community (Yasothon Province)
- H - Tha Muong Community (Roi-et Province)
- I - Sa-ard temple (Khon Kaen Province)
- J - Manchakhiri Cultural Home (Khon Kaen Province)
- K - Kok Kong Phutai Cultural Village (Kalasin Province)

It is necessary to note that case B was managed by local administration, which was not in the earlier-mentioned criteria, but was chosen because, firstly, it was on the route connected to another case listed by the same province, which was case A, and therefore it was worth visiting; and, secondly, the researcher wanted to confirm that there were no additional community-based activities to those recorded in the database, mainly because this case represented one ethnicity in Thailand who had tried to preserve their traditional lifestyles in the face of economic development. In addition to case B, case K was serendipitously selected because it was famed for its eco-styled 'homestay', which the researcher became aware of, and it was possible to visit from other cases found from the database. These cases, nevertheless, would be examined against the developed framework, which will be described in the stage 2 selection process.

4.1) CODING AND INTERPRETATION OF AVAILABLE DESCRIPTIONS OF THE 11 POTENTIAL CASE STUDIES

As mentioned above, descriptions appear to play an important role in the initial selection processes; therefore, information on descriptions could be relevant sources. Criteria that the researcher searched after the descriptions were those relevant to the concept of community archives defined by the West, but also incorporated the concept of intangible heritage, such as traditional performances maintained by communities. Some examples of extracts from the selected institutions' descriptions as well as the codes demonstrating the community archive-alike are presented in the following table.

Table 4: Coding analysis of the 11 potential case studies from their descriptions

Case	Description extracts	Codes and interpretation
A	There was no description in the database but there were several links to blogs and websites created by the Gallery team for the researcher to gain general information from. It was mentioned that Surin City Gallery was established by a group of people interested in the history of the province and who started to collect old photos and later stored and distributed these for the purpose of providing history education to the wider public. ²⁶⁰	Old photos = collection. A group of people who are interested in history = community. Collect, store and distribute old photos = evidence of archival activities.
B	According to Khun Samun, the centre had been undertaking a project "Bring the Elephants Home, Help Develop our Hometown." The project attempted to stop the practice of a mahout wandering about with his elephant trying to make a	The project "Bring the elephants home, help develop our hometown" = evidence of an attempt to rebuild a community that seems to have been weakened by socio-economic impacts; therefore, presentation of being a community.

²⁶⁰ Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn Anthropology Centre. *Surin City Gallery*; Surin City Gallery. 2012. *Surin City Gallery: the place for learning local history* (<http://suringallery.blogspot.co.uk/>; Surin City Gallery); --- 2013. *Surin City Gallery* (<http://suringallery.blogspot.co.uk/>; Surin City Gallery)

Case	Description extracts	Codes and interpretation
	<p>living, which often leads to tragic accidents of the elephants getting hit by vehicles on the roads. The project offered each mahout an 8,000-baht monthly salary for one elephant that he looked after: 4,000 for the mahout and 4,000 for the elephant.</p> <p>The Elephant Studies Centre and its project have really brought the elephants home to their old habitats. This benefited the local people too as they could sell souvenirs to tourists, the centre being a tourist attraction in Surin. Elephant shows were held daily. Elephant rides were also available, and the elephants can take visitors around the centre.</p> <p>The centre also houses a museum, a kind of learning place for tourists. Its one-storey building had displays of whole elephant skeletons, and separate body parts like the jaws. A mahout's seat on the elephant's back and his instruments were displayed to demonstrate how he captured, harnessed, and tamed a wild elephant.</p> <p>There was also another exhibition which provided information on the evolution of elephants and rituals related to them, as well as pictures of elephant round-ups,</p>	<p>A museum = a collection of local materials related to the lifestyles – including tools, equipment and rituals – of a specific ethnicity, the Kui.</p> <p>The spirit shrine = a symbol for spiritual minded centre of the community's members and communicating it to outsiders.</p>

Case	Description extracts	Codes and interpretation
	<p>and ones showing the ethnic Kui's relationship with the elephants.</p> <p>Visitors were also encouraged to visit the Pa-Kum spirit shrine. A group of seniors of Gui ethnicity looked after the shrine at all times, and tourists could talk to them for information about their traditional lifestyles in relation to the elephants since they had inherited rituals and beliefs related to life living with elephants over a long period of time.²⁶¹</p>	
C	<p>Though simple in their structure, the centre's four buildings encompassed a powerful creative force. They look like a sculptural work decorating the surrounding forest gardens. The first building was designated as a museum of children and youth's art, housing all the art pieces since Kru Sangkom's pioneering year in 1978. The selected pieces are from those prize-winning works of thousands of children artists.²⁶²</p>	<p>A museum of arts = a collection of artworks from a community of art students at this school.</p> <p>Mr. (Kru) Songkom = an individual collector.</p>
D	<p>The Ban Na Pa Nat villagers were descendants of the Tai Dam clan whose ancestors had been brought over from the town of Puan during the Thai suppression of the Haw or the Yunanese in 1875. In the present wake of local cultures and</p>	<p>Keeping the spoken language 'sen ruen' alive until the present day = the community's (intangible) heritage.</p> <p>There is a cultural centre = a place to showcase the ethnic materials and</p>

²⁶¹ Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn Anthropology Centre. 2012. *The Elephant Study Centre*

²⁶² ---2012. *The Elephant Study Centre*

Case	Description extracts	Codes and interpretation
	<p>traditions, the Ban Na Pa Nard, consequently, has come into the limelight, being the single Tai Dam village in Loei Province still able to keep the traditions and heritage handed down to them, such as the “sen ruen” or spoken language, amazingly alive and not influenced by today’s new, modern lifestyles.</p> <p>The Ban Na Pa Nat Tai Dam Ethnic Groups Cultural Center was established around 2003 by local Loei academicians and with the villagers’ help. The Tai Dam Conservation Association, whose members are mostly the villagers, runs the Centre. The Centre itself consists of simply structured buildings. One is a model Tai Dam house, next to it is the village housewives’ weaving centre.²⁶³</p>	<p>activities.</p> <p>However, the Centre was established by the academicians with help from villagers = implies that the original motivation of heritage preservation was not driven by the community members themselves.</p>
E	<p>The Dan Sai Museum in Wat Ponechai used to be the old chamber, built in 1935, of the abbot. It is all wood and in the local architectural style. The museum is a complete collection of artefacts related to the culture and tradition of Dan Sai town.</p> <p>The first room provides information on the town of Dan Sai and the Phra That Srisongruk, and covers the history of Dan Sai going back 400 years. There is the legendary history of the Phra That too.</p>	<p>The museum = a place to collect relevant materials about the Dan Sai community's traditional activities, which are composed of 2 main parts – the Boon Luang Festival and Pee Ta Khon dance.</p> <p>Recognition of both ceremonies was initially promoted by the Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT) with support from the community = evidence of community engagement in decision</p>

²⁶³ Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn Anthropology Centre. 2012. *Tai Dam Centre of Na Pa Nad Village*

Case	Description extracts	Codes and interpretation
	<p>Zone 2, the “pee ta khon” room, is about the “heet sip song kong sibsee” tradition of the Isan people, the “Bunluang Festival”, and the pee ta khon ritual. It all started in 1979 when Tourism Authority of Thailand promoted tourism in the area. Consequently, more people showed interest in visiting the town and more questions were asked. Thus, with the initiation of the Dan Sai Adult Education Centre officers, a fund was allocated from TAT and the Loei Province to set up the museum, which also received support from the abbot and the community itself. During the Boon Luang Festival, visitors from all over Thailand flock to Wat Ponchai. Thus, the museum, as well as being a learning centre for the Boon Luang ceremony and the Pee Ta Khon Mask Dance...²⁶⁴</p>	<p>making about having such a place to showcase their community's events.</p>
F	<p>The Pak Mun Museum was designated to commemorate the Pak Mun villagers’ struggles as well as to record the stories of their ways of life before and after the [Pak Mun Dam was built]. The Centre was built in 1999 and opened to the public in 2003.</p> <p>The exhibit items were either donations or contributions from the villagers, some</p>	<p>Pak Mun Museum = a place to keep records of the community's activism.</p> <p>Exhibition items were donated or contributed by the villagers =</p> <p>Engagement of community members to set up a place for keeping their memories of activism.</p>

²⁶⁴ Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn Anthropology Centre. 2012. *Dan Sai Folk Museum*

Case	Description extracts	Codes and interpretation
	<p>of which were related to the protest movements, the “Thammachart Yattra for the River Mun Project”, for example. Some exhibits were from the Mae Mun Yung Yuen check-point. The museum and its topics were finished with the help of some NGO activists, and academicians.²⁶⁵</p>	<p>The museum and its topics were supported by NGO activists and academicians. = There is outside support for the community’s activities.</p>
G	<p>“Yasothon History House” was established by the Yasothon Heritage Conservation Club, which was initially begun with the private collection of Mr. Sompong Youkong, who is interested in collecting antiques, and who started doing so at 12 years old (in 1986). His interest in antiques drove him to research further about the local history, using old documents and oral history from different communities within Yasothon province, and he subsequently published a book entitled 'Storytelling of Yasothon'. Various items are exhibited in the House, from the first enacted law of the old Yasothon (then known as Yodsoonthon) and the insignia of rank of the former Yodsoonthon mayor to his ancient tools and equipment, as well as old documents and photographs of the town. The 'Yasothon History House' has been</p>	<p>The history house = a place to keep collections</p> <p>Mr. Sompong = an individual collector, native to Yasothon</p> <p>A network to work on heritage activities = cooperation amongst the community members to preserve their heritage.</p>

²⁶⁵ Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn Anthropology Centre. 2012. *Pak Moon River Community Cultural Centre*

Case	Description extracts	Codes and interpretation
	<p>managed in the form of a network between several parties that work on different heritage activities, which comprises the following groups: 1) historical museum and the history house, 2) tourist information and community tourism, 3) former mayor's lineage, and 4) old town Singhatha home-staying.</p> <p>[Researcher's translation from Thai description, SAC database]²⁶⁶</p>	
H	<p>The temple collects palm-leaf scriptures and ancient Khoi papers wrapped in cotton cloth and tied into bundles. It is a huge inventory of ancient scriptures and they are well preserved and cared for by Ven. Suth, the abbot. The abbot is a native of the town who was educated in Bangkok and worked in other provinces before being ordained in his hometown. The collection is an attempt to provide knowledge to the community. The scriptures are systematically kept and registered for future study. Some of them have been microfilmed. In addition, the temple also has a beautiful religious cloth banner several metres long.²⁶⁷</p>	<p>Palmleaf scriptures and ancient Khoi papers = textual materials, archives</p> <p>Scriptures and papers wrapped in cotton cloth and tied into bundles = evidence of preservation in archival theory</p> <p>Collections cared for by Ven. Suth = curator</p> <p>The abbot is a native of the town = community member</p> <p>An attempt to provide knowledge to the community = awareness of the value of archives in community identity</p>

²⁶⁶ Retrieved from http://www.sac.or.th/databases/museumdatabase/review_inside_ByMember_Detail.php?id=1494&CID=42371, 24 April 2014.

²⁶⁷ Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn Anthropology Centre. 2012. *Tha Muang Cultural Center*

Case	Description extracts	Codes and interpretation
		<p>The scriptures are systematically kept and registered for future study = evidence of preservation and representation of evidential benefit to the community and commitment to sustainability</p> <p>Microfilming = sustainability</p>
I	<p>This Local Heritage Preservation Hall was originated by the former abbot of Wat Sa-at, who had a passion for antique collecting. Whenever he was on his trips to deliver sermons in any community, if he happened to come across some valuable items that had been discarded or neglected by their owners, he would ask to take them back to the temple. When the number of items grew, with the help of the local people, he set up a local museum. After his death, the next abbot, Phra Supan Pannavaro, carried on taking care of the museum. Fortunately, he is also interested in old things, cultures and traditions. Thus, the Wat Sa-at Museum has become as established as it is today.²⁶⁸</p>	<p>The hall = a place to keep heritage.</p> <p>The former abbot = individual collector</p> <p>The former abbot set up a local museum with support from the local people. = implies engagement of community members with the collection.</p> <p>The next abbot continues to take care of the former abbot's collection = inherited individual collector</p>
J	<p>As a descendant of the former governors, Ajarn SRS has the intention to conserve this old noble residence he has inherited</p>	<p>The centre = a place to maintain the collection.</p>

²⁶⁸ Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn Anthropology Centre. 2012. *Wat Sa-At Local Heritage Preservation Hall*

Case	Description extracts	Codes and interpretation
	<p>from his ancestors, and to keep it as a learning centre for young people and the townspeople, so that they could learn about Mancha Khiri, its history, and its beautiful local culture and tradition. The display comprises heritage items, and items from the best Mancha Khiri product competitions. These include silk and some natural products – mats, fabrics, basketry. There is also a display of old photos of some important cultural and traditional events, rituals, and the places of interest in Mancha Khiri. There are also pictures of the people such as those of the beauty queens (beauty queen competitions are popular here), and of old-time cremation rites, and more.²⁶⁹</p>	<p>Mr. SRS = an individual collector/a curator</p> <p>Background of his inheritance from his ancestors and a native of the town = representing an individual collector who comes from the community itself in which this fact could potentially support the issues of sustainability.</p> <p>The displayed items = collections</p>
K	<p>Kok Kong Phutai Cultural Village is a small village located by a foothill of mountains that are part of Phu Pha Vua National Park. The village is in the Gudwa district and has been promoted by the province [Kalasin] to be a model of the home-staying Phu Tai ethnic tourism. This kind of tourism will allow the tourists to stay with the villagers in their homes in order to learn about their lifestyles, such as traditional rituals for welcoming self-spirit (พิธีบายศรีสู่ขวัญ),</p>	<p>The village has been promoted for its good practice in relation to home-staying, which is a way of eco-tourism related to the villagers' ethnicity, Phu Tai = implies that the community has a strong traditional identity.</p> <p>The community presents traditional ways of life to the tourists = the community's members still maintain their (intangible) heritage through their rituals and local knowledge.</p>

²⁶⁹ Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn Anthropology Centre. 2012. *Muang Mancha Khiri Cultural Center*

Case	Description extracts	Codes and interpretation
	<p>traditional remedies (การรักษาผู้ป่วย), eating local meals, watching traditional performances, hiking in the nearest forest to learn about local plants and herbs, and visiting Tad Sung-Tad Yao waterfall in the National Park.</p> <p>[Researcher's translation from the Thai version on the Tourism Authority of Thailand's website]²⁷⁰</p>	

STAGE 2:

ASSOCIATION OF THE 11 POTENTIAL CASE STUDIES WITH THE FRAMEWORK DEVELOPED TO SELECT THEM

STAGE 2.1:

DEVELOPMENT OF A FRAMEWORK TO IDENTIFY THE CASE STUDIES

Analysis of existing literature on community archives (see Chapter 3, pages 42 - 62) suggests that the frameworks developed in the area of community archive studies appear to be less relevant to a Thailand context; therefore, an alternative methodological framework has been developed in order to establish more suitable criteria for selection of the case studies. The developed framework was based on the works of Gilliland and Newman.²⁷¹ Gilliland developed the so-called community-centric framework for approaching archives and recordkeeping, which includes several aspects for recordkeeping professionals to take into consideration when involving themselves with community archives. The list includes elements that can be used to define community archives including typology of the potential communities; motivations for archives and recordkeeping; community characteristics; documentation characteristics; and policy considerations. While Gilliland's framework has provided general guidelines for the case studies' selection, Newman's framework helps to

²⁷⁰ Tourism Authority of Thailand. 2013. *Kok Kong Phutai Cultural Village*

²⁷¹ Newman, J. 2011. 'Sustaining Community Archives', *Aplis*, 24, pp.37-45; Gilliland, A.J. [2012]. *Voice, Identity, Activism (VIA): a community-centric framework for approaching archives and recordkeeping*

filter the selected cases by considering whether those potential communities might represent any evidence of issues associated with sustainability.

The developed framework is composed of three main aspects: community and members, documentation, and policy and practices. The first aspect, community and members, has been used as a guideline to consider the characteristics of a community and its people; the second, documentation, helps to consider the resources kept by a community; and the last, policy and practices, is an element that helps to justify whether the materials held by a community should be considered as defined by the concept of community archive for this research, and it combines policy, practices and sustainability aspects.²⁷²

Table 5: Methodological framework developed for selection of case studies

Framework	Relevant questions
1. Community and members	
1.1 Existence of community	- Is a community physically present?
1.2 Availability of community's key informants	- Is there a community representative to interview? - Are there volunteers working in the archives to interview?
1.3 Motivation: key informants to provide information on motivations for community archiving	- Is there a key informant to provide information about motivation? - Can motivation be identified?
1.4 Availability of community resources	- Are there tangible or intangible resources maintained by a community? - Does a collection have local significance and is it defined in relation to locality?
1.5 Characteristics of community and community boundaries	- Is there a key informant to provide information about a community and its boundaries?

²⁷² See also the discussion on the definition of 'community archives' in Chapter 3 The Community Archives Movement

1.6 Feasibility of observation in the community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Would observation be possible? - Is there ongoing practice? - Is there performance?
1.7 Status quo of an archive	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What is the purpose(s) for establishing an archive? What are missions, goals and objectives (if any)? - How has an archive been established? - Has the establishment of an archive been supported by any agency? If yes, what type of supporting fund was provided (once/continuously)? - Has an archive been registered with the state or relevant governmental organisation? - Is there evidence of a community's commitment to maintain an archive?

2. Documentation

2.1 Documentation characteristics: availability of key informants to provide information regarding documentation of community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Is there documentation? - Is there intangible heritage? - Is there a curator(s) to interview/observe in relation to documentation? - Have collections been/or appear to have been made spontaneously? - Is there existing scholarship?
2.2 Interactions between community documentation or heritage	
2.3 Language used for communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Could the key informants communicate in standard Thai or Isan dialect?

3. Policy and practices

3.1 Existing policy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Is there a policy/Are there policies?
3.2 Accessibility of policies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Are policies accessible?

3.3 Common practices	- Are there common practices suggestive of unwritten policies?
3.4 Authority of policy and/or practices	- Is there someone with authority to describe policies and/or practices?
3.5 Ownership of community's heritage	- Is ownership known? - Could the ownership be identified? - Does the community own the heritage?
3.6 Decision making	- Is there evidence of decisions having been made? - Is there someone to ask about decision-making processes?
3.7 Relevant policies	- Are there relevant policies or protocols?
3.8 Practices	- Is there evidence of preservation activities? - Is there evidence of description? - Is there evidence of community access? - Is there evidence of third-party access?
3.9 Collaboration	- Is there evidence of collaboration with other organisation(s)?
3.10 Dynamism	- Is there evidence of commitment to grow, adoption of changes or long-term plan regarding the maintenance of the heritage?
3.11 Outreach	- Are there outreach programmes offered by an archive? - Is there evidence of expression of interest from a community for outreach programmes

STAGE 2.2:

FINALISING THE SELECTION TO FOUR CASE STUDIES

Description of the final selection of the case studies, which started as 11 potential cases and were narrowed down to four case studies, is given in the form of the table below.

Table 6: Selection of the final four case studies from the 11 potential cases based on the developed methodological framework and findings from ‘Phase One’

Case	Selection (<u>Y</u> es / <u>N</u> o)	Examination of the descriptions against the developed framework
A – Surin City Gallery	Y	<p>Y – It shows the existence of community (a group of people who are interested in local history research and established this gallery)</p> <p>Y – There are key informants available for data collection (co-founder of the gallery, whom the researcher met during ‘Phase One’, and the volunteers or curators who work for the galley).</p> <p>Y – There is a collection</p> <p>Y – There are ongoing archival activities which could be observable</p> <p>Y – The potential respondent(s) can communicate in either Thai or Isan dialect.</p> <p>This institution had met most criteria in the developed methodological framework. There was a collection of photographs related to local events and people. There was a community of people who were interested in local history and heritage, and who were founders, employers or volunteers for this institution. According to the findings from ‘Phase One’, there was evidence of preservation (storage) and community impacts such as exhibitions outside of the gallery.</p>

Case	Selection (Yes / No)	Examination of the descriptions against the developed framework
B – Elephant Study Centre	N	<p>Y – There is a collection of materials that represent the community identity (a museum).</p> <p>Y – There is evidence of motivation to preserve the community identity (through a project ‘Bring the elephants home, help develop our hometown’).</p> <p>Y – There is a sense of community bonding amongst its members via the spirit house and it is also a symbol through which to communicate with outsiders.</p> <p>However, this case was eliminated because the researcher felt that the community might lack ownership over their heritage representation, which is probably communicated more through the tourism campaigns from the government section or private stakeholders rather than by the community members themselves.</p>
C – Sirindhorn Art Centre	N	<p>Y – There is a collection of artworks.</p> <p>Y – There is an individual collector.</p> <p>The findings from informal interviews with the individual collector imply that there is an obstacle relating to support in sustaining the collection, especially after the collector retires.</p>
D – Tai Dam Centre of Na	N	Y – There is evidence of motivation to maintain

Case	Selection (<u>Y</u> es / <u>N</u> o)	Examination of the descriptions against the developed framework
Pa Nad Village		<p>the community's heritage; this is seen by its members are re-learning their traditional language and in their cooperation to establish the Centre.</p> <p>Y – There is a place for showcasing the community identity through exhibitions at the Centre and performances when there are visitors to the village.</p> <p>This could be selected as a type of ethnic archives; however, the researcher had concerns about the fact that it had long been a case study for other previous studies, which may affect the research participants' responses in providing information that they think the researcher wants to hear based on their experience of participation in other studies. Moreover, since intangible heritage was likely to be the main investigation, there is an alternative community that the researcher preferred and which could represent this type of intangible heritage community in a similar way to this one. That alternative, which was selected, was community E, which will be discussed next.</p>
E – Phi Ta Khon and Grand Ceremony of Dan Sai Community	Y	<p>Y – There is a museum to showcase community identity (tangible heritage).</p> <p>Y – There is an annual event related to the community's faith, which represents intangible</p>

Case	Selection (<u>Y</u> es / <u>N</u> o)	Examination of the descriptions against the developed framework
		<p>heritage that the community members want to preserve.</p> <p>Y – There is evidence of community engagement in preserving their heritage through the ceremony processes and participation of the community members.</p> <p>This community has been selected as one of the research case studies because its members show a strong sense of community bonding and self-drive to preserve their traditional heritage, which also implies community engagement, which is one of the criteria mentioned in the methodological framework. Moreover, there are also explicit key informants who could provide information for the research. The event is also observable by the public.</p>
F – Pak Moon Local Intellectual Village Centre	N	<p>Y – There is a place to keep evidence of their activism activities (the museum).</p> <p>Y – There is evidence of community engagement through the exhibition items, which were donated by the villagers themselves, and the museum was established by the villagers, which represents their motivation to preserve their community activities.</p> <p>This community itself could potentially be defined as a community archive that is motivated</p>

Case	Selection (<u>Y</u> es / <u>N</u> o)	Examination of the descriptions against the developed framework
		<p>by an activism campaign. The community conducts ongoing activities such as regular meetings to attack the government about their rights over Moon River for their agricultural lands. They have had the exhibition, which is a collection of their livelihood items especially those related to fishery, before and after the impacts from the development of the dam. It was likely that this community was potentially suitable for this study, but the findings from ‘Phase One’ revealed that the villagers are more likely to be focused on their ongoing activism activities rather than keeping evidence of their demonstrations.</p>
G – Singhata Community	N	<p>Y – There is a collection (a house).</p> <p>Y – There is a key informant (an individual collector).</p> <p>Y – There is evidence of community engagement through a network of cooperation on different heritage activities.</p> <p>This community was likely to be a suitable case study, but the researcher learned that there were many communities in Thailand in which heritage activities were derived from one person, an individual collector, who may be proud of their family’s leading class ancestors in the past, and thus became interested in local history and</p>

Case	Selection (<u>Y</u> es / <u>N</u> o)	Examination of the descriptions against the developed framework
		collected ancient items. Therefore, since there is a similar case available which is more convenient in practicality, the researcher eliminated this case and selected case J, Manchakhiri Cultural Home, instead.
H – Tha Muong Community	Y	<p>Y – There is evidence of heritage collection (palm-leaf scriptures and Khoi papers).</p> <p>Y – There is evidence of archival activities (preservation of the manuscripts).</p> <p>Y – There is evidence and a sense of sustainability of the collection (microfilming of the scriptures, which are systematically maintained and registered for future study).</p> <p>Y – There are available key informants (the curator of the collection and the abbot).</p> <p>This community could fulfil almost all the criteria in the developed methodological framework; therefore, it was selected as one of the case studies.</p>
I – Sa-ard temple	N	<p>Y – There is a collection and a repository (the hall).</p> <p>Y – There is an individual collector.</p> <p>Y – There is evidence of community engagement</p>

Case	Selection (<u>Y</u> es / <u>N</u> o)	Examination of the descriptions against the developed framework
		<p>(support from the villagers to set up the hall).</p> <p>This met some criteria in the framework; however, the findings from informal interviews with the individual collector/curator of this collection indicated that the collection was unlikely to be maintained for long-term sustainability as it was mainly cared for by the individual collector/curator and there was a sense of negligence from the community members at the time that ‘Phase One’ took place.</p>
J – Manchakiri Cultural Home	Y	<p>Y – There is a collection and repository (the Cultural Home).</p> <p>Y – There is a key informant (an individual collector/curator of the collection).</p> <p>This institution is similar to case G and was selected instead because of the aforementioned reasons (see case G).</p>
K – Kok Kong Phutai Cultural Village	N	<p>Y – There is a sense of a strong traditional identity (promotion of ‘home-stay’ tourism).</p> <p>Y – There is a sense of community engagement in heritage activities (rituals and local knowledge).</p> <p>This community’s fame is related to its traditional lifestyles, which have been promoted</p>

Case	Selection (<u>Y</u> es / <u>N</u> o)	Examination of the descriptions against the developed framework
		as a model for eco-tourism. However, according to an informal interview with the community members during ‘Phase One’, the researcher learned that the sense of community initiative seemed to be low because the heritage activities only happened when tourists came into the community, while their interest in heritage preservation was unlikely to be sustainable for the longer term if the tourism promotion faded away in the future.

Based on the above table, the reasons for selection of the four case studies for this research are repeated below.

A – Surin City Gallery	This institution met most criteria in the developed methodological framework. There was a collection of photographs related to local events and people. There was a community of people who were interested in local history and heritage, and who were founders, employers or volunteers for this institution. According to the findings from ‘Phase One’, there was evidence of preservation (storage) and community impacts such as exhibitions outside of the gallery.
E – Phi Ta Khon and Grand Ceremony of Dan Sai Community	This community has been selected as one of the research case studies because its members show a strong sense of community bonding and self-drive to preserve their traditional

	<p>heritage driven by themselves, which also implies community engagement, which is one of the criteria mentioned in the methodological framework. Moreover, there are also explicit key informants who could provide information for the research. The event is also observable by the public.</p>
H – Tha Muong Community	<p>This community could fulfil almost all the criteria in the developed methodological framework; therefore, it was selected as for of the case studies.</p>
J – Manchakiri Cultural Home	<p>This institution was selected as a representative for those communities which were derived from an individual collector or curator in order to compare the results with heritage activities which were engaged in by a group of community members since there was a range of similar case in a Thai context.</p>



Figure 10: Map showing the locations of the four case studies finally selected for the research, image created and applied from Google maps

APPENDIX B:

TERMINOLOGY

USE OF THE TERM 'COMMUNITY ARCHIVES' IN THE LITERATURE

It has been claimed that the term 'community archives' was first mentioned in a statement that appeared in the 2004 report of the UK Archives Task Force (ATF), which stated that "archives in the community [were] as important to society as those in public collections and should therefore be accessible to everyone".²⁷³ However, in the UK particularly, it is likely that the term became more widely known by recordkeeping professionals and the general public with the growth of the Community Archives and Heritage Group (CAHG), which was established in 2006 and which welcomes contributions from individuals, groups and communities in the country. Although the birth of the CAHG is a new phenomenon, as it is only a decade old, the term 'community archive' has been used to represent the existing phenomenon of heritage activities owned and/or managed by the communities since the 1960s. According to Flinn, the community archive movement – in the UK particularly – largely started from the establishment of historical projects or workshops by local history groups, a practice which has grown phenomenally since WWII.

A second factor involves concerns from marginalised groups about inequalities of race, ethnic and diasporic identities; many political campaigns have been associated with such issues since the end of the 19th century and especially from the 1960s, being linked with the American civil rights movement and the growing awareness of power associated with immigrant communities in the UK. Subsequently, many of these groups felt that the records that represented their identities were either absent or excluded from public archives; therefore, they were struggling to trust these institutions to preserve the community records that had value for them.²⁷⁴

Other issues relating to the community archive movement are discussed elsewhere, in Chapter 3; however, for the purpose of this section, the focus is to identify the terms to be

²⁷³ ATF, 2004, 43 as cited in Flinn, A. 2010. *The impacts of independent and community archives on professional archival thinking and practice*, in Hill, J. (ed.) *The Future of Archives and Recordkeeping: a reader* (London: Facet Publishing), p.145

²⁷⁴ Flinn, A. 2007. 'Community Histories, Community Archives: Some Opportunities and Challenges', *Journal of the Society of Archivists*, 28, pp.151-176

applied for data collection purposes, particularly those terms that are used in the Western literature, and the appropriateness of their application for interviewing and observing the Thai participants will be discussed.

The concept of 'community archive' seems to have been acknowledged by the British audience since the aforementioned AFT report published in 2004, and the term has also been used by other academics elsewhere, besides those in the UK. For example, South African scholars Eales and Harris used two terms, 'community archives' and 'nonpublic archive'.²⁷⁵ Since the release of those articles from the South African academics, the same term, 'community archive', has been mentioned frequently in literature by UK scholars, particularly Flinn (2007; 2008; 2010; 2011; 2011; and Flinn, Stevens and Shepherd, 2009).²⁷⁶ Although this term has been used to represent heritage activities or heritage collections that are owned and/or managed by the communities, its definition remains problematic and controversial. One reason for this is that the label has been used as a replacement for similar heritage activities that communities have always undertaken for many years. These activities or organisations may have appeared in previous studies under different names, as listed below:

- local history group,
- oral history project,
- community history project,
- community memory project,
- independent community archive,
- independent archive,

²⁷⁵ Eales, K. 1998. 'Community archives: Introduction', *S.A. Archives Journal*, 40, p.11; Harris, V. 1998. 'Some thoughts on the relationship between the national archives and community archives', *S.A. Archives Journal*, 40, pp.36-37

²⁷⁶ Flinn, A. 2007. 'Community Histories, Community Archives: Some Opportunities and Challenges', *Journal of the Society of Archivists*, 28, pp.151-176; ---2008. 'Archives and their communities: serving the people', *Comma*, 2008, pp.157-168; ---2008. 'Other ways of thinking, other ways of being. Documenting the margins and the transitory: What to preserve, how to collect', in Craven, L. (ed.) *What are archives? Cultural and theoretical perspectives: a reader* (Hampshire: Ashgate Publishing), pp. 109-128; ---2010. 'The impacts of independent and community archives on professional archival thinking and practice', in Hill, J. (ed.) *The Future of Archives and Recordkeeping: a reader* (London: Facet Publishing), pp.145-169; ---2010. 'Independent Community Archives and Community-Generated Content: 'Writing, Saving and Sharing our Histories'', *Convergence: The International Journal of Research into New Media Technologies*, 16, pp.39-51; ---2011. *Archival activism: independent and community-led archives, radical public history and the heritage professions* (California: eScholarship, University of California); ---2010. 'An attack on professionalism and scholarship?': Democratising Archives and the Production of Knowledge', *Ariadne: A Web & Print Magazine of Internet Issues for Librarians & Information Specialists*, 30; Flinn, A., M. Stevens, and E. Shepherd. 2009. 'Whose memories, whose archives? Independent community archives, autonomy and the mainstream', *Archival Science*, 9, pp.71-86

- informal archive,
- heritage initiative,
- community archival activity,
- non-professionalized archival activity,
- non-professionalized heritage activity,
- non-professional archival initiatives,
- independent community-led archives,
- autonomous archive,
- ethnic archive,
- oral history archive, and
- local archive.

The above list is a compilation of UK terms used by notable scholars from the field of 'community archives', but it might be worth investigating other resources to examine what terms are used to represent 'community archives' or relevant heritage activities. To start with the available glossaries in the archival and records management terms such as the widely accepted glossary of archival and records terminology provided by the Society of American Archivists, which was published in 2005. Results from the search thorough this glossary reveal no designated terminology for 'community archive' or relevant concept.²⁷⁷

In New Zealand, the glossary provided by Archives New Zealand includes the term 'The Community Archive' as part of the Continuum Definition(s), which is defined as follows:

A web-based guide to archival and manuscript holdings of archives, libraries, museums, galleries, schools, and societies across New Zealand. The Community Archives listings may be searched or browsed by a number of criteria.²⁷⁸

From further investigation of the website <http://thecommunityarchive.org.nz>, which is linked to The Community Archive web-based guide, it is understandable that this appears to be an alternative repository for collections given freely by individuals, organisations or

²⁷⁷ <http://www2.archivists.org/glossary>, investigated November 2016

²⁷⁸ Archives New Zealand (Te Rua Mahara o te Kāwanatanga). 2011. *Archives New Zealand Annual Report 2010/11*

communities to showcase their collections virtually by having this portal as the facilitator. This may be similar to the CAHG, but the difference is that the latter was founded by a general audience rather than by public archival professionals.

Moving from New Zealand to its neighbouring country, Australia, where discussion related to colonial records seems to occur frequently, articles appear to use various terms to describe the same function, community archives, such as 'community archives' (Sassoon), community-based approach, and community approaches to heritage and community projects.²⁷⁹ It is also worth noting that there is a similar project to New Zealand's Community Archive web portal known as Australia's Community Heritage, which was funded by the Australian Government under the Your Community Heritage Programme. Australia's Community Heritage is a place for anyone to tell stories of persons, places or events that are important to them. In this case, the website itself may be considered as a community archive in the form of virtual oral history.²⁸⁰

Having learned from the above examples that various terms can be used to mean the same thing ('community archive') and that they can represent the concept of 'community archive' differently but share the same goal, which is to preserve community heritage, it is not perhaps surprising to find that the situation is no different in other languages, such as Thai. In fact, in the English-speaking world, synonymous terms for 'community archive' sometimes have different meanings as well; for instance, 'local archive' may have a different meaning for Canadians and New Zealanders to the British audience, as discussed in Flinn.²⁸¹ As for Thailand, although the term 'community archive' could be directly interpreted as 'จดหมายเหตุชุมชน' [chod-maai-hedd-chum-chon] because the word 'community' is translated as 'ชุมชน' [chum-chon] and 'archive' is translated as 'จดหมายเหตุ' [chod-maai-hedd], there appears to be no relevant literature using this term up to this point of this study. It may be necessary to note about the use of the Thai terminology for archive, 'จดหมายเหตุ', that it comprises three different

²⁷⁹ Greer, S. 2010. 'Heritage and empowerment: Community-based Indigenous cultural heritage in northern Australia', *International Journal of Heritage Studies*, 16, pp.45-58; Sassoon, J., and T. Burrows. 2009. 'Minority reports: indigenous and community voices in archives. Papers from the 4th International Conference on the History of Records and Archives (ICHORA4), Perth, Western Australia, August 2008', *Archival Science*, 9, pp.1-5

²⁸⁰ 'Welcome to the Community Heritage website', retrieved from <http://www.communityheritage.net.au/content/about-site>, 22nd April 2014

²⁸¹ Flinn, A. 2011. *Archival activism: independent and community-led archives, radical public history and the heritage professions* (California: eScholarship, University of California)

words altogether, จด [chod], หมายถึง [maai], and เหตุ [hedd]', which each have their own meaning. The word จด [chod] means 'to record or to write'; หมายถึง [maai] means 'to aim'; and เหตุ [hedd]' means 'cause or reason'. Normally, the term 'จดหมายเหตุ' will be defined as the archival records, while adding a word 'หอ' in front of this term to be 'หอจดหมายเหตุ' would mean a building that keeps the archival records; an example is the National Archives of Thailand or 'หอจดหมายเหตุแห่งชาติ'. Moreover, the term 'จดหมายเหตุ' could be separated as จดหมาย [chod-maai] and หมายถึงเหตุ [maai-hedd], making two different words in which จดหมาย [chod-maai] means 'letter' and หมายถึงเหตุ [maai-hedd] means 'note'.

Since one of the research objectives is to investigate how Thai people identify their heritage activities – in which the concern is also how they identify their community heritage as a comparison with understandings of 'community archive' defined by the Western literature – it is hoped that identifying an appropriate term for associated activities will be one result of this study. However, according to the working definition of 'community archive' designed for the purpose of this investigation, a couple of examples of 'community archive' already exist in Thailand.

The first example is the Buddhadasa Indapanno Archives, whose archival aim is “to collect, maintain and set up a database for original written works by Buddhadasa Bhikkhu”, a monk who is widely respected by many Thais and who passed away years ago, but whose teachings are continuously reproduced for interested audiences.²⁸² This institution describes its collections as ‘archives’; however, according to the developed framework, it is a community archive because the organisation was established from volunteering support and funding, which has now become a foundation and runs several Buddhism activities. There is a team of archivists or curators who work on the archival collections and they, including other staff, are all volunteers. If based on the working definition of community archive, this could be considered as a community archive because the collections are owned and managed by the community, whose interest is to preserve the works of the particular monk.

²⁸² Retrieved from BiA (Suan Mokkh Bangkok), <http://www.bia.or.th/en/index.php/2013-10-23-08-11-05/about-suanmokkh-bkk>, 4 March 2014

Another example of community-led archives is The Thai Rainbow Archive, which is potentially the first virtual online archive established by a group of Thais. The name on its website is 'The Thai Rainbow Archive: A Digitised Collection of Thai Gay, Lesbian and Transgender Publications'; the paralleled Thai name is โครงการจัดเก็บเอกสารของกลุ่มคนหลากหลายทางเพศในประเทศไทย: การแปลงเอกสารสิ่งพิมพ์ของเกย์ เลสเบี้ยน และคนข้ามเพศเป็นดิจิทัล. Considering the name used for this project, it is noticeable that, while the word 'archive' is used for the English version, in Thai 'โครงการจัดเก็บเอกสาร' [krong-gann-chad-kepp-ekkasann] or 'recordkeeping project' [self-translated by the researcher] was chosen to mean 'archive' in this context.

In fact, the term 'community archive' could simply connect several Thai words to create a new term which could be translated exactly the same as the English, which is 'จดหมายเหตุชุมชน' [chod-maai-hedd-chom-chon]. Nevertheless, this terminology does not appear to be used anywhere in Thai literature. The terms used to define 'community archive' from Western literature and the terms discovered in Thai literature to define the use of 'archive' for archive and recordkeeping activities are listed in the table below.

Western terms for 'community archive'	Thai terms for archive and recordkeeping activities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • local history group • oral history project • community history project • community memory project • independent community archive • independent archive • informal archive • heritage initiative • community archival activity • non-professionalized archival activity • non-professional archival initiatives • independent community-led archives • autonomous archive 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • จดหมายเหตุ [chod-maai-hedd] • โครงการจัดเก็บเอกสาร [krong-gann-chad-kepp-ekkasann] • จดหมายเหตุชุมชน [chod-maai-hedd-chom-chon] (direct translation from English but no evidence of use in Thai literature)

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ethnic archive • oral history archive • local archive 	
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Having considered the terms used in Western literature and compared those with the limited Thai terms, it is interesting to investigate whether some of these Western terms could potentially be understood by the Thai audience; therefore, all the terms listed in the above table are translated [self-translation] into Thai, as seen below.

Western terms for 'community archive'	Thai terms for archive and recordkeeping activities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • local history group • oral history project • community history project • community memory project • independent community archive • independent archive • informal archive • heritage initiative • community archival activity • non-professionalized archival activity • non-professional archival initiatives • independent community-led archives • autonomous archive • ethnic archive • oral history archive • local archive 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • กลุ่มประวัติศาสตร์ท้องถิ่น • โครงการประวัติศาสตร์บอกเล่า • โครงการประวัติศาสตร์ชุมชน • โครงการความทรงจำท้องถิ่น • จดหมายเหตุชุมชนอิสระ • จดหมายเหตุอิสระ • จดหมายเหตุที่ไม่เป็นทางการ • มรดกเบื้องต้น • กิจกรรมทางจดหมายเหตุชุมชน • กิจกรรมทางจดหมายเหตุของมือสมัครเล่น • กิจกรรมทางมรดกของมือสมัครเล่น • การริเริ่มทางจดหมายเหตุของมือสมัครเล่น • จดหมายเหตุอิสระที่ก่อตั้งโดยชุมชน • จดหมายเหตุนอกกรอบ • จดหมายเหตุชาติพันธุ์ • จดหมายเหตุประวัติศาสตร์บอกเล่า • จดหมายเหตุท้องถิ่น

I have eliminated some of the terms from the list of Thai terms, which are simply translated from the Western terms, because they are unlikely to make sense to a Thai audience. I provide reasons for the decision about each term in the following table.

Western terms for 'community archive'	Thai terms for archive and recordkeeping activities	Reasons
local history group	กลุ่มประวัติศาสตร์ท้องถิ่น	This is a reasonable term although the alternative term could be ชมรมประวัติศาสตร์ท้องถิ่น, in which the word 'ชมรม' [chom-romm] means 'club', and it was seen to be used in the heritage context such as for a group of Yasothon people who support the preservation of local history and who appear in the SAC database. The group is called the 'Yasothon Heritage Conservation Club' ²⁸³
oral history project	โครงการประวัติศาสตร์บอกเล่า	This is also a reasonable term but it is specific to oral history projects
community history project	โครงการประวัติศาสตร์ชุมชน	Reasonable term
community memory project	โครงการความทรงจำชุมชน	Reasonable term
independent community archive	จดหมายเหตุชุมชนอิสระ	This term is likely to be problematic because, whenever the term

²⁸³ Retrieved from http://www.sac.or.th/databases/museumdatabase/en/review_inside.php?id=1494, 22 April 2014

		'community archive' is directly translated into Thai as 'จดหมายเหตุชุมชน', it may cause confusion to the Thai audience. In addition, the word 'independent' is unlikely to be a good combination with 'community archive' in the Thai context because independent is translated as 'อิสระ', which is more usually defined as 'freely', which may cause the interviewees to question what it is free from.
independent archive	จดหมายเหตุอิสระ	Unlikely to be a suitable term based on a similar reason to the one provided for the above term, independent community archive – จดหมายเหตุชุมชนอิสระ
informal archive	จดหมายเหตุที่ไม่เป็นทางการ	The word 'informal' may make the Thai audience immediately think it is in opposition to the government section and when combined with the word 'archive', the meaning of which is unclear itself, it would probably make less sense to the interviewees.
heritage initiative	มรดกเบื้องต้น	It is difficult to find an appropriate word for

		'initiative', which will be translated along with the word 'heritage'; therefore, this term is unlikely to be meaningful to the interviewees.
community archival activity	กิจกรรมทางจดหมายเหตุชุมชน	As 'community archive' seems to be unclear to Thais, adding 'activity' to it may cause more confusion to the interviewees; thus, this is unlikely to be a suitable term.
non-professionalized archival activity	กิจกรรมทางจดหมายเหตุของมือสมัครเล่น	These three terms contain the word 'professional' which, similar to 'informal', represents the management by someone who knows better than ordinary people; therefore, these terms should be avoided in order to lessen negative feeling from the community players. Other relevant concerns have also been stated elsewhere, such as those relating to the words 'activity' and 'initiative'.
non-professionalized heritage activity	กิจกรรมทางมรดกของมือสมัครเล่น	
non-professional archival initiatives	การริเริ่มทางจดหมายเหตุของมือสมัครเล่น	
independent community-led archives	จดหมายเหตุอิสระที่ก่อตั้งโดยชุมชน	Unlikely to be a suitable term. See above reasons for 'independent community archive' and 'independent archive'.
autonomous archive	จดหมายเหตุนอกระบบ	Unlikely to be a suitable term. The reason is similar to that

		applied to the term 'informal archive'.
ethnic archive	จดหมายเหตุชาติพันธุ์	Reasonable term but more appropriate with communities that have a strong sense of ethnicity from the Thai majority.
oral history archive	จดหมายเหตุประวัติศาสตร์บอกเล่า	Reasonable term but it is specific to a community that is interested or potentially interested in making an oral history project for heritage preservation.
local archive	จดหมายเหตุท้องถิ่น	Reasonable term.

The next table provides the finalised terms from the filtered results of the above table. It is necessary to note that the eliminated terms are kept for later in the analysing process as they might appear in the interviews.

Western terms for 'community archive'	Thai terms for archive and recordkeeping activities
local history group	กลุ่มประวัติศาสตร์ท้องถิ่น
oral history project	โครงการประวัติศาสตร์บอกเล่า
community history project	โครงการประวัติศาสตร์ชุมชน
community memory project	โครงการความทรงจำชุมชน
ethnic archive	จดหมายเหตุชาติพันธุ์
oral history archive	จดหมายเหตุประวัติศาสตร์บอกเล่า
local archive	จดหมายเหตุท้องถิ่น

In addition to the selected terms above to refer to 'community archive' in a Western concept, several terms are also invented to supplement them because, as being Thai, the researcher believes that these neologisms would probably be more understandable to a Thai audience than a translation of the Western words. Therefore, many words were originally invented with their parallel translated terms as shown in the table below.

จดหมายเหตุชุมชน community archive	บันทึกเหตุการณ์ชุมชน community event records	บันทึกวัฒนธรรมชุมชน records of community culture
จดหมายเหตุท้องถิ่น local archive	บันทึกเหตุการณ์ท้องถิ่น local event records	บันทึกวัฒนธรรมท้องถิ่น records of local culture
บันทึกชุมชน community records	บันทึกประวัติศาสตร์ชุมชน historical records of community	บันทึกมรดกชุมชน records of community heritage
บันทึกท้องถิ่น local records	บันทึกประวัติศาสตร์ท้องถิ่น historical records of locality	บันทึกมรดกท้องถิ่น records of local heritage
บันทึกเรื่องราวชุมชน records of community stories	บันทึกสารสนเทศชุมชน records of community information	บันทึกมรดกและวัฒนธรรมชุมชน records of community heritage and culture
บันทึกเรื่องราวท้องถิ่น records of local stories	บันทึกสารสนเทศท้องถิ่น records of local information	บันทึกมรดกและวัฒนธรรมท้องถิ่น records of local heritage and culture
ชมรมประวัติศาสตร์ชุมชน community's history club	ชมรมประวัติศาสตร์ท้องถิ่น local history club	พิพิธภัณฑ์ museum
บ้าน / เรือน / คู่ม วัฒนธรรม cultural house	ศูนย์วัฒนธรรม cultural centre	

All the potential terms since the discussion began are listed below.

local history group กลุ่มประวัติศาสตร์ท้องถิ่น	ethnic archive จดหมายเหตุชาติพันธุ์	community memory project โครงการความทรงจำชุมชน
oral history project โครงการประวัติศาสตร์บอกเล่า	oral history archive จดหมายเหตุประวัติศาสตร์บอกเล่า	recordkeeping project โครงการจัดเก็บเอกสาร (used by the Thai Rainbow Archive)
community history project โครงการประวัติศาสตร์ชุมชน	local archive จดหมายเหตุท้องถิ่น	archive จดหมายเหตุ (used by i.e. Buddhadasa Indapanno Archives)
จดหมายเหตุชุมชน community archive	บันทึกเหตุการณ์ท้องถิ่น local event records	บันทึกวัฒนธรรมท้องถิ่น records of local culture
บันทึกชุมชน community records	บันทึกประวัติศาสตร์ชุมชน historical records of community	บันทึกมรดกชุมชน records of community heritage
บันทึกท้องถิ่น local records	บันทึกประวัติศาสตร์ท้องถิ่น historical records of locality	บันทึกมรดกท้องถิ่น records of local heritage
บันทึกเรื่องราวชุมชน records of community stories	บันทึกสารสนเทศชุมชน records of community information	บันทึกมรดกและวัฒนธรรมชุมชน records of community heritage and culture
บันทึกเรื่องราวท้องถิ่น records of local stories	บันทึกสารสนเทศท้องถิ่น records of local information	บันทึกมรดกและวัฒนธรรมท้องถิ่น records of local heritage and culture

บันทึกเหตุการณ์ชุมชน community event records	บันทึกวัฒนธรรมชุมชน records of community culture	community's history club ชมรมประวัติศาสตร์ชุมชน
local history club ชมรมประวัติศาสตร์ท้องถิ่น	พิพิธภัณฑ์ museum	บ้าน / เรือน / คู่ม วัฒนธรรม cultural house
ศูนย์วัฒนธรรม cultural centre		

This list of potential terms will be used as a tool to supplement the interview questions as part of the investigation of the definition of community archive.

Before the next section, which concerns the interview questions, I would like to further discuss the neologisms mentioned above. Two written Thai words, 'chum chon' (ชุมชน) and 'tong thin' (ท้องถิ่น), were purposely chosen to be combined with others to form potential terms that may represent 'community archive'. The word 'chum chon' means 'community' in English while 'tong thin' means 'local' or 'locality'. According to definitions given by the Thai Royal Institute Dictionary, those two words are defined as follows:

ชุมชน หมายถึง หมู่ชน, กลุ่มคนที่อยู่รวมกันเป็นสังคมขนาดเล็ก อาศัยอยู่ในอาณาบริเวณเดียวกัน และมีผลประโยชน์ร่วมกัน

[Chum chon means a crowd or a group of people living as a small society in the same area and who have mutual benefits amongst each other]

“ท้องถิ่น หมายถึง ที่องที่ใดที่องที่หนึ่งโดยเฉพาะ เช่น เวลาท้องถิ่น ประเพณีท้องถิ่น [Tong thin means a specific area, i.e. local tradition and local time]”²⁸⁴

²⁸⁴ Thai Royal Institute. 1999. *Potchananukrom Chabab Rajabundittayasatan Por Sor 2542* [Thai Royal Institute Dictionary: online version 0.9 BE 2542] (Thai Royal Institute), Retrieved from <http://rirs3.royin.go.th/dictionary.asp>, 28 March 2014

It could be seen from the Thai definitions that those two words are very briefly defined, whereas they appear to be more complex and detailed in English definitions given by the Oxford Dictionary:

Community means a group of people living in the same place or having a particular characteristic in common; a group of people living together and practising common ownership; a particular area or place considered together with its inhabitants; a body of nations or states unified by common interests; and the people of a district or country considered collectively, especially in the context of social values and responsibilities; society.

Local means relating or restricted to a particular area or one's neighbourhood; relating to a particular region or part, or to each of any number of these; and a local person or thing, in particular.²⁸⁵

It is interesting that the definition of community in Thai, *chum chon*, specifies that a group of people have a limited geographical living area and that they share the same benefits, whereas the definition in English is more inclusive: that community can include people who have a particular characteristic in common or practise common ownership. This meaning is closer to the definition of community archive discussed in the section related to the case studies of community archives. Moreover, the definition of local in Thai, *tong thin*, is not as precise as the English one, although the focus is the same, which is a particular area; however, the Oxford Dictionary attempts to further explain 'particular area' more inclusively, by adding 'region or part or to each of any number of these', which allows better interpretation of the word.

Having investigated the definitions of both words from Thai and English dictionaries, it is necessary to conclude that these two words were purposely selected to define the same term, 'community archive', because they could easily be used and understood to mean the same thing, such as 'community', by the participants of this research. Although the ultimate meaning of 'community archive' will eventually be defined by the subjected communities

²⁸⁵ Oxford University Press, *Oxford Dictionaries*, <http://www.oxforddictionaries.com/> edn, 2014 vols (2014)

themselves, it is necessary to have a 'working definition of community archive' for the purpose of this investigation.

The working definition of community archive is built around definitions given by previous studies in the field and it is defined as:

Community archive is a collection of tangible heritage or an action of self-dedication to preserve the intangible heritage of a community of which community engagement amongst its members in such processes is the most important feature.

APPENDIX C:

SELECTION OF QUESTIONS FOR SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW

Part 1 is a set of closed questions that was designed to elicit short answers, either yes/no answers or simple factual information. Some of these questions can be asked or observed.

Questions 1 – 8 are related to background information of the communities or organisations.

Question 9 is related to ownership and management topic.

Question 10 – 11 and 13 – 17 are related to activities and participation topic.

Question 12 is related to definition of community and motivations for establishment of community archives topic.

Questions	Objectives
1. Your name 2. Age 3. Gender 4. Religion 5. Are they speaking in Thai / Dialect? 6. Class? 7. Organisation 8. Role in the organisation	Questions 1 – 8 will provide <u>general background</u> of the interviewees.
9. Where does the money / resources come from? (If there are separated budgets) Where did the core funding come from and where do the running costs come from?	To understand <u>fundamental management</u> of the collection.
10. Do you have a name list of the things you have here? (If there is no list) How do you remember what you have held?	To understand <u>description</u> process.

<p>(If there is a list)</p> <p>Do you update it?</p> <p>How is the list organised?</p> <p>Did you have to look at any example list when you made it?</p>	
<p>11. Who is responsible for this collection (selecting, describing, preserving and / or making it accessible)?</p> <p>11.1 Are they always the same responsible people or new people?</p> <p>11.2 Are there volunteers?</p>	<p>To know <u>a person / a group of people who engage</u> in documentation activities.</p>
<p>12.</p> <p>12.1 (Tangible) What do you call these materials that you have been collecting in your house or organisation?</p> <p>12.2 (Intangible) How would you describe this event that is taking place every year in this community?</p> <p>12.3 (Given out a list of words and read to the interviewees)</p> <p>12.3.1 Have you seen or known about these words before?</p> <p>12.3.2 Do you like any of these words?</p> <p>12.3.3 Would you use any of them to represent your collection or activities that you have been collecting or doing?</p> <p>12.3.4 If you do not like these words, would you want to suggest better word(s) to call your collection / activities?</p>	<p>To identify <u>meaning of collection</u> by the owners / curators.</p>
<p>13. Do you have other storage located somewhere else besides this display space /</p>	<p>To understand about <u>preservation</u> process.</p>

building? (If yes) 13.1 Why do you keep them there? 13.2 Who is the owner of that space? 13.3 What is it like? 13.4 Is it accessible by general interested audience?	
14. Can anyone visit this collection / gallery?	To understand about <u>accessibility</u> .
15. If many people are involved with the same work processes, what are the roles of each person? 15.1 Can they substitute for each other when any are unavailable? 15.2 If substitution is possible, how would they make sure the processes meet the same standard? 15.3 Is it necessary to be standardised? 15.4 Who will control that standard?	To understand the <u>work practices</u> .
16. Are there any work manuals or other relevant document for their guidance? (If not) 16.1 How do the curators, staff or volunteers learn to do so or who would teach them or control them for those processes?	To find out about whether <u>standard</u> of practice and work <u>guidelines</u> exist.
17. If you have written policies, are they available to be seen by public?	To find out whether <u>relevant policies</u> exist.

Part 2 is a set of open questions that was designed to elicit longer responses and to engage the respondent to reflect on the nature of their community archive.

Question 1, 10 – 11 are related to definition of community and motivations for establishment of community archives topic.

Question 2 is related to ownership and management topic.

Question 3 – 9 are related to activities and participation.

Question 12 is to give opportunities for the interviewees to supplement the interviews.

Questions	Objectives
<p>1. Could you tell me, in your own words, about the story of this collection / events?</p> <p>Subsidiary themes elicited/further questions to be posed (as appropriate):</p> <p>1.1 Why was the collection established at the first time? / How did the event begin?</p> <p>1.2 Who would benefit from this collection?</p> <p>1.3 Why is it important to have this collection / event?</p>	<p>To find out about <u>motivations</u> behind having the collection or events.</p>
<p>2.</p> <p>2.1 (Tangible) How is the collection / organisation managed / administered?</p> <p>2.2 (Intangible) This event takes place every year since your father's generation. How do you ensure that all relevant activities for this ceremony are done the same way as they used to be?</p> <p>Subsidiary themes/further questions (as appropriate) might include:</p> <p>2.2.1 How do you remember the processes?</p> <p>2.2.2 Are these processes kept secret from the public?</p> <p>2.2.3 If you have to choose the next inherited leader, how would you pass</p>	<p>To understand 1) <u>fundamental management</u> of collection and 2) the extent to which communities have <u>ownership</u> over their heritage and the authority to manage that by themselves.</p>

<p>knowledge of these processes to him / her?</p> <p>2.2.4 Have you ever had fear that these processes might have been lost through time?</p> <p>2.2.5 Apart from you, is there somebody who knows as much about the event / work processes as you do?</p> <p>2.2.6 Is there a third party that play a role in collecting activities of your collection / organisation?</p> <p>2.2.7 Has there been any interest from other organisations to offer a way of preserving this event / collection for you?</p> <p>2.2.8 Have you ever thought of recording this event?</p> <p>2.2.8.1 If so, how would you do it? How should it be recorded?</p> <p>2.2.8.2 Who would be responsible for the recording?</p> <p>2.2.8.3 Where should the records be kept?</p> <p>2.2.8.4 Who can have access to the records?</p> <p>2.2.8.5 Do you know whether this event has been recorded before?</p> <p>2.2.8.6 If so, by whom and where are the records kept?</p> <p>2.2.8.7 Are you happy with the way it has been recorded / advertised by the outsiders? If not, what would you do?</p>	
<p>3. How do you choose which materials should go into your collection and which</p>	<p>To understand <u>appraisal</u> process.</p>

<p>should not?</p> <p>3.1 Do you have criteria on selecting materials?</p>	
<p>4. How do you introduce / describe these materials to the visitors?</p>	<p>To understand <u>description</u> process.</p>
<p>5. Do you do anything to preserve these materials?</p> <p>(If yes)</p> <p>5.1 How do you know it has to be done that way?</p> <p>5.2 Have you been trained before?</p>	<p>To understand <u>preservation</u> process.</p>
<p>6.</p> <p>6.1 (Tangible)</p> <p>6.1.2 Has there been any occasion that the visitors want to borrow, use or research your materials? Would you allow them to?</p> <p>6.1.3 How do you assess the appropriateness of the request?</p> <p>6.2 (Intangible)</p> <p>Do you explain the ceremony / event to the outsiders / non-participants?</p> <p>6.3</p> <p>6.3.1 In case that your community heritage has been recorded, preserved or represented by other parties such as the local museum or the tourism authority, have you been involved with that interpretation by the others?</p> <p>6.3.2 Are you happy with the way the event was recorded?</p>	<p>To understand about <u>accessibility</u>.</p> <p>To understand about the authority of community's ownership on <u>interpretation of their heritage</u> and whether there is any <u>sense of marginalisation</u>.</p>
<p>7. Does what you do here affect other groups</p>	<p>To find out whether:</p>

of people or communities? (either consciously or unconsciously?)	1) an organisation or community have any <u>outreach activities</u> ; and 2) activities by one organisation or community have any <u>impacts on other communities</u> .
8. What are the challenges for keeping your collection or traditional activities?	To find out about <u>challenges</u> that the communities / collector may have in order to <u>assess sustainability</u> .
9. What do you think will be the long-term future of your collection / organisation? Subsidiary themes elicited/further questions to be posed (as appropriate): 9.1 What if the head of this project is no longer interested in prolonging this collection or event, what would happen next? What would be the impacts of that decision? 9.2 Who would be the one in charge of decision making for management of this collection / traditional activities in relation to the changes?	To investigate the extent to which a community or organisation prepare for <u>sustainability and risk management</u> of their heritage.
10. In your own word, how would you define your community?	Seeking to elicit a <u>self-defined sense of 'community'</u> .
11. How do you think this collection benefits the community (or anyone else)? 11.1 Who is it for? 11.2 Are there other stakeholders?	To understand how the collections are used for <u>community identity</u> .
12. Are there anything you would like to add that I might have missed in the questioning?	To give opportunities for the interviewees to <u>supplement the interviews</u> .

APPENDIX D:

GUIDELINE FOR SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Semi-structured Interview Questions

Research title: (Self-)Documentation of Thai communities: Does the Western community archive provide a model?

Researcher: Kanokporn Nasomtrug, PhD student (Archives and Records Management),
University of Liverpool

Pre-Statement: The purpose of this questionnaire is purely for research. I am a research student from the University of Liverpool, funded by the Thai government. The purpose of the research is to learn about community heritage documentation in Thailand and to make suggestions and recommendations for sharing best practice. You are free to ask questions of your own after the interview. Recordings will be destroyed when the report is written. Your name will not be given in the report and your identity will be protected as much as possible.

Part 1: CLOSED QUESTIONS (CAN BE ASKED OR OBSERVED)

- 1. Your Name:**
- 2. Age:**
- 3. Gender:**
- 4. Religion:**
- 5. Are they speaking in Thai / Dialect?**
- 6. (Class?)**
- 7. Organisation:**
- 8. Role in the organisation:**
- 9. Where does the money / resources come from?:**
 - 9.1 (If there are separated budgets)
Where did the core funding come from and where do the running costs come from?
- 10. Do you have a name list of the things you have here?:**
 - 10.1 (If there is no list)
How do you remember what you have held?

10.2 (If there is a list)

Do you update it?

How is the list organised?

Did you have to look at any example list when you made it?

11. Who is responsible for this collection (selecting, describing, preserving and /or making it accessible)?

11.1 Are they always the same responsible people or new people?

11.2 Are there volunteers?

12.

12.1 (Tangible) What do you call these materials that you have been collecting in your house or organisation?

12.2 (Intangible) How would you describe this event that is taking place every year in this community?

12.3 (Given out a list of words and read to the interviewees)

12.3.1 Have you seen or known about these words before?

12.3.2 Do you like any of these words?

12.3.3 Would you use any of them to represent your collection or activities that you have been collecting or doing?

12.3.4 If you do not like these words, would you want to suggest better word(s) to call your collection / activities?

13. Do you have other storage located somewhere else besides this displaying space / building?

(If yes)

13.1 Why do you keep them there?

13.2 Who is the owner of that space?

13.3 What is it like?

13.4 Is it accessible by general interested audience?

14. Can anyone visit this collection / gallery?

15. If many people are involved with the same work processes, what are the roles of each person?

15.1 Can they substitute for each other when any are unavailable?

15.2 If substitution is possible, how would they make sure the processes meet the

same standard?

15.3 Is it necessary to be standardised?

15.4 Who will control that standard?

16. Are there any work manuals or other relevant document for their guidance?

16.1 (If not)

How do the curators, staff or volunteers learn to do so or who would teach them or control them for those processes?

17. If you have written policies, are they opened to be seen by public?

Part 2: OPEN QUESTIONS

1. Could you tell me, in your own words, about the story of this collection / event?

Subsidiary themes elicited/further questions to be posed (as appropriate):

1.1 Why was the collection established at the first time? / How did the event begin?

1.2 Who would benefit from this collection?

1.3 Why is it important to have this collection / event?

2. 2.1 (Tangible) How is the collection / organisation organised?

2.2 (Intangible) This event takes place every year since your father's generation. How do you ensure that all relevant activities for this ceremony are done the same way as they used to be?

Subsidiary themes/further questions (as appropriate) might include:

2.2.1 How do you remember the processes?

2.2.2 Are these processes kept secret from the public?

2.2.3 If you have to choose the next inherited leader, how would you pass knowledge of these processes to him / her?

2.2.4 Have you ever had fear that these processes might have been lost through time?

2.2.5 Apart from you, is there somebody who knows as much about the event / work processes as you do?

2.2.6 Is there a third party that play a role in collecting activities of your collection / organisation?

2.2.7 Has there been any interest from other organisations to offer a way of preserving

this event / collection for you?

2.2.8 Have you ever thought of recording this event?

2.2.8.1 If so, how would you do it? How should it be recorded?

2.2.8.2 Who would be responsible for the recording?

2.2.8.3 Where should the records be kept?

2.2.8.4 Who can have access to the records?

2.2.8.5 Do you know whether this event has been recorded before?

2.2.8.6 If so, by whom and where are the records kept?

2.2.8.7 Are you happy with the way it has been recorded / advertised by the outsiders? If not, what would you do?

3. How do you choose which materials should go into your collection and which should not?

3.1 Do you have criteria on selecting materials?

4. How do you introduce / describe these materials to the visitors?

5. Do you do anything to preserve these materials?

(If yes)

5.1 How do you know it has to be done that way?

5.2 Have you been trained before?

6. 6.1 (Tangible) Has there been any occasion that the visitors want to borrow, use or research your materials? Would you allow them to? How do you assess the appropriateness of the request?

6.2 (Intangible) Do you explain the ceremony / event to the outsiders / non-participants?

6.3 (Intangible) In case that your community heritage has been recorded, preserved or represented by other parties such as the local museum or the tourism authority, have you been involved with that interpretation by the others? Are you happy with the way the event was recorded?

7. **Does what you do here affect other groups of people or communities?** (either consciously or unconsciously?)
8. **What are the challenges for keeping your collection or traditional activities?**
9. **What do you think will be the long-term future of your collection / organisation?**
Subsidiary themes elicited/further questions to be posed (as appropriate):
 - 9.1 What if the head of this project is no longer interested in prolonging this collection or event, what would happen next? What would be the impacts of that decision?
 - 9.2 Who would be the one in charge of decision making for management of this collection / traditional activities in relation to the changes?
10. **In your own words, how would you define your community?**
11. **How do you think this collection benefits the community (or anyone else)?**
 - 11.1 Who is it for?
 - 11.2 Are there other stakeholders?
12. **Are there anything you would like to add that I might have missed in the questioning?**

APPENDIX E:

MUSEUMS LISTED BY PROVINCE FROM SAC DATABASE

Krabi	Bangkok	Kanchanaburi	Kalasin
Kamphaeng Phet	Khon Kaen	Chantaburi	Chachoengsao
Chonburi	Chainat	Chaiyaphum	Chumporn
Chiang Rai	Chiang Mai	Trang	Trat
Tak	Nakhonnayok	Nakhonpathom	Naknon Phanom
Nakhon Ratchasima	Nakhonsi Thammarat	Nakhonsawan	Nonthaburi
Narathiwat	Nan	Buriram	Buengkan
Pathumthani	Prachuapkhirikhan	Prachinburi	Pattani
Ayuthaya	Phayao	Phang Nga	Phatthalung
Phichit	Phitsanulok	Phetchaburi	Phetchabun
Phrae	Phuket	Maha Sarakham	Mukdaharn
Mae Hong Son	Yasothon	Yala	Roi Et
Ranong	Rayong	Ratchaburi	Lopburi
Lamphang	Lamphun	Loei	Si Saket
Sakon Nakhon	Songkhla	Satun	Samutprakan
Samut Songkhram	Samut Sakhon	Sakaeo	Saraburi
Suratthani	Singburi	Sukhothai	Suphanburi
Surin	Nong Khai	Nong Bua Lamphu	Ang Thong
Amnat Charoen	Udon Thani	Uttaradit	Uthaithani
Ubon Ratchathani			

APPENDIX F:
CONSENT FORM (ENGLISH)



Committee on Research Ethics

PARTICIPANT CONSENT FORM

Title of Research Project: Documenting of community's cultural heritage in Thailand: case studies of 4 communities in the Northeast (Isan) region

Researcher(s): Kanokporn Nasomtrug

**Please
initial box**

- I confirm that I have read and have understood the information sheet dated [March 2014] for the above study. I have had the opportunity to consider the information, ask questions and have had these answered satisfactorily.
- I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time without giving any reason, without my rights being affected. In addition, should I not wish to answer any particular question or questions, I am free to decline.
- I understand that, under the UK Data Protection Act, I can at any time ask for access to the information I provide and I can also request the destruction of that information if I wish.
- I agree to take part in the above study.

Participant Name

Date

Signature

Researcher

Date

Signature

Student Researcher:

Kanokporn Nasomtrug
Department of History, University of Liverpool
12, Abercromby Square, Liverpool L69 7WZ, United Kingdom

+44 (0) 151 794 2534
hsknasom@liverpool.ac.uk

Optional Statements

- I accept to be identified by name.

Agree ☐

Disagree ☐

If disagree please see below.

I understand that my name will not be linked with the research materials, and I will not be identified or identifiable in the report that result from the research.

Agree ☐

- I accept to be identified by position.

Agree ☐

Disagree ☐

If agree please specify your position and institution in the blank.

I agree to be identified as a/an (position as appropriate)
of(Name of institution).

- I accept to be identified as a member of(Name of community).

Agree ☐

Disagree ☐

- I accept to be identified as other (please specify).....

Agree ☐

Disagree ☐

- I understand that my responses will be kept strictly confidential. I give permission for members of the research team to have access to my anonymised responses.

Agree ☐

Disagree ☐

- I understand and agree that what I have said or written as part of this study will be used in reports, publications and other research outputs so that anything I have contributed to this project can be recognised.

Agree ☐

Disagree ☐

- I agree for the data collected from me to be used in future research and understand that any such use of identifiable data would be reviewed and approved by a research ethics committee.

Agree ☐

Disagree ☐

- I understand and agree that my participation will be audio recorded and/or photographed and I am aware of and consent to your use of those recordings for the following purposes:

- PhD thesis ☐ Yes ☐ No
- Scientific papers in peer reviewed academic journals ☐ Yes ☐ No
- Conferences ☐ Yes ☐ No
- Seminars ☐ Yes ☐ No

- I understand and agree that once I submit my data it will become anonymised and I will therefore no longer be able to withdraw my data.

Agree ☐

Disagree ☐

CONSENT FORM (THAI)

คณะกรรมการพิจารณาจริยธรรมการวิจัย

เอกสารแสดงความยินยอมเข้าร่วมการวิจัย

ชื่อโครงการวิจัย:

การบันทึกมรดกทางวัฒนธรรมของชุมชนไทย
กรณีศึกษาชุมชน 4 แห่งในภาคตะวันออกเฉียงเหนือ (อีสาน)

ผู้วิจัย:

นางสาวกนกพร นาสมศรี

โปรดกาเครื่องหมายถูก
ในช่องสี่เหลี่ยม
หากท่านเห็นด้วย
กับข้อความเหล่านี้

- ข้าพเจ้ายินยอมได้อ่านเอกสารข้อมูลสำหรับผู้มีส่วนร่วมงานการวิจัย (ฉบับมีนาคม 2557) โดยละเอียดแล้ว และได้พิจารณาและซักถามผู้วิจัยต่อข้อคำถามที่มี โดยได้รับคำตอบเป็นที่น่าพอใจแล้ว ☐
- ข้าพเจ้าเข้าใจแล้วว่า การเข้าร่วมในงานวิจัยเรื่องนี้เป็นไปด้วยความสมัครใจของข้าพเจ้าเองและข้าพเจ้ามีสิทธิ์ที่จะปฏิเสธการมีส่วนร่วมในครั้งนี้เมื่อใดก็ได้หากข้าพเจ้าต้องการโดยจะไม่มีผลกระทบต่อสิทธิใดๆ ต่อข้าพเจ้า นอกจากนี้ ข้าพเจ้าสามารถปฏิเสธที่จะไม่ตอบคำถามใดๆ ก็ได้ที่ข้าพเจ้าไม่ประสงค์จะให้คำตอบ ☐
- ข้าพเจ้าเข้าใจแล้วว่า ข้าพเจ้าสามารถเรียกร้องที่จะเข้าถึงข้อมูลที่ได้ให้ไว้เมื่อใดก็ได้ (ภายใต้กฎหมายคุ้มครองสิทธิข้อมูลส่วนบุคคลของสหราชอาณาจักร) และสามารถขอให้ผู้วิจัยทำลายข้อมูลส่วนนั้นหากข้าพเจ้าไม่ต้องการให้มีการเผยแพร่ ☐
- ข้าพเจ้ายินยอมเข้าร่วมการวิจัยเรื่องนี้ ☐

ชื่อผู้เข้าร่วมในการวิจัย

วันที่

ลายมือชื่อ

ผู้วิจัย

วันที่

ลายมือชื่อ

นักศึกษาผู้ทำวิจัย:

นางสาวกนกพร นาสมศรี

ภาควิชาประวัติศาสตร์ มหาวิทยาลัยลิเวอร์พูล

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คำชี้แจงเพิ่มเติม

- ข้าพเจ้ายินยอมให้ระบุชื่อข้าพเจ้าได้

เห็นด้วย

ไม่เห็นด้วย

หากไม่เห็นด้วย กรุณาอ่านย่อหน้าถัดไป

ข้าพเจ้าเข้าใจแล้วว่า จะไม่มีการระบุชื่อหรือการอ้างอิงใดๆ ที่จะทำให้ทราบเอกลักษณ์ของข้าพเจ้าได้ในวิทยานิพนธ์เรื่องนี้

เห็นด้วย

- ข้าพเจ้ายินยอมให้ระบุตำแหน่งของข้าพเจ้าได้

เห็นด้วย

ไม่เห็นด้วย

หากเห็นด้วย กรุณาระบุตำแหน่งและหน่วยงาน ตามความเหมาะสม

ข้าพเจ้ายินยอมให้ระบุตำแหน่งของข้าพเจ้าคือ ... (ชื่อตำแหน่ง)

สังกัด (ชื่อหน่วยงาน)

- ข้าพเจ้ายินยอมให้ระบุได้ว่าเป็นสมาชิกของชุมชน / กลุ่ม ... (ชื่อชุมชน / กลุ่ม)

เห็นด้วย

ไม่เห็นด้วย

- ข้าพเจ้ายินยอมให้ระบุอัตลักษณ์อื่นๆ คือ (โปรดระบุ).....

เห็นด้วย

ไม่เห็นด้วย

- ข้าพเจ้าเข้าใจแล้วว่า ข้อมูลจากการวิจัยจะถูกเก็บไว้เป็นความลับและอนุญาตให้ผู้วิจัยและคณะกรรมการที่ปรึกษาการวิจัยเรื่องนี้เท่านั้นที่จะสามารถเข้าถึงข้อมูลส่วนนี้ได้

เห็นด้วย

ไม่เห็นด้วย

- ข้าพเจ้าเข้าใจแล้วว่า ข้อมูลที่ข้าพเจ้าได้ให้ผู้วิจัยไปจะถูกนำไปใช้ในการเขียนวิทยานิพนธ์ งานตีพิมพ์และงานวิจัยอื่นๆ เพื่อให้ข้อมูลเหล่านั้นเกิดคุณค่าต่อไป

เห็นด้วย

ไม่เห็นด้วย

- ข้าพเจ้ายินยอมให้ใช้ข้อมูลภาคสนามนี้เพื่อประโยชน์ต่องานวิจัยในอนาคต และข้อมูลที่มีการระบุอัตลักษณ์จะได้รับการพิจารณาและอนุมัติจากคณะกรรมการพิจารณาจริยธรรมการวิจัยของมหาวิทยาลัยด้วย

เห็นด้วย

ไม่เห็นด้วย

- ข้าพเจ้าเข้าใจและยินยอมให้มีการบันทึกเสียงจากการสัมภาษณ์ และ/หรือบันทึกภาพที่เกี่ยวข้อง เพื่อประโยชน์ดังนี้

- วิทยานิพนธ์ปริญญาเอก [] เห็นด้วย [] ไม่เห็นด้วย
- บทความทางวิชาการ [] เห็นด้วย [] ไม่เห็นด้วย
- การประชุมทางวิชาการ [] เห็นด้วย [] ไม่เห็นด้วย
- การสัมมนา [] เห็นด้วย [] ไม่เห็นด้วย

- ข้าพเจ้าเข้าใจแล้วว่า เมื่อข้อมูลถูกนำไปประมวลผลแล้วจะเปลี่ยนเป็นข้อมูลที่ไม่มีการระบุอัตลักษณ์ (ยกเว้นได้รับการยินยอมจากท่านตามที่ระบุไว้ในข้ออื่นๆ ก่อนหน้านี้) และจะไม่สามารถขอคืนข้อมูลเหล่านั้นได้

เห็นด้วย

ไม่เห็นด้วย

APPENDIX G:
EXAMPLE OF FIELD NOTES

Field notes**Events: Interview with CLD****Site: TM****5th day: Fri 12.09.2014****Time: 3 – 5 p.m.**

Description

I woke up early to go to CLD's house as I had an informal appointment with him before he went on business upcountry and was not available to have an interview with me when I went to see him on the day I moved in to the accommodation and he told me to come back to see him today.

When I went to his house, it was approximately 10 a.m. and I saw him, but he told me to come back in the afternoon as he was still busy tidy up his house after the trip. He and his family just got back home last night and did not finish settling in yet.

In the afternoon, I went to see him again at his convenient time as told by him this morning and he was already waiting for my arrival. I had an interview with him for almost 2 hours. I asked him to be the key informant since he was often referred to from the villagers and the previous interviewees that he knew all information I would need about the heritage preservation especially those related to Tai Noi script preservation processes. Before starting the interview, I introduced myself, my research project and asked him to sign the consent form.

Although he was chosen as the key informant, I also had opportunity to interview PKW, the monk who was the original leader of all the relevant projects; therefore, some of the questions were already answered by PKW and were taken into account.

The interview took place at his house where there were his wife and daughter around. Sometimes, the wife joined in the conversation but only at the very end of the interview.

CLD used to be a monk and he earned his education while being monk, which took him quite a long time to finish the degrees until he could pass the test to become a teacher. He grew up,

studied (while being monk) and lived in the village all his life. There was a small gap when he worked in the neighbouring village, but he still lived in the village. Therefore, he would know and remember about important events happened in the village very well.

He had got good memory in remembering the village timeline as I noticed from what he told me about the events taken in certain year was very clear. His house was only around the corner from the temple; therefore, when the villagers had something to tell all the village members, they would come to CLD asking him to announce those announcements for them through the temple speaker. Because he liked to participate in all activities of the village as well as going to the temple to practice on the holy days often made him become the main person to take this role as the village speaker. He said that he was also a note taker when there were villagers' monthly meetings and he would announce about the meetings through the temple wire so all village members would know about the meeting as well. His personality was quite passive that he did not talk much. This may be because he used to be a monk for long time and preferred being quiet or maybe it was because I was a stranger and he did not feel fully engage in the interview.

He mentioned about volunteering may be the way out for the learning centre, which may happen in the future for this village. [Building of the centre was stopped since the leave of PKW.] He was quite positive that the villagers of this village had volunteering mind. However, he said that the idea of getting government sector involve with the project was also potential as they may be able to support for funding and human resource. His wife said that some villagers had suggested him to be the keeper of the centre as well since he was retired and had much free time to support that.

Conclusion of CLD was that:

- He maybe thought as the local historian or the local scholar of the village since he knew most of the historical events of the village and he researched about them. He gave me the outline of the village which was created when the villagers wanted to make the street name signs. He also composed the folk song which told story of the village from the pass. This song had been used for some performance to show the visitors at special occasions. He would coach the students to play the roles on performance. He also composed the school march where he used his own money for the recording and he himself sang the song as well.

- He had pride in his root, which was a person who grew up in this village and liked to support activities of this village as much as he could.
- He distributed his knowledge through others whenever he could such as telling history of the village through the temple wire when there were religious events and there was the request for donation from the villagers. He would be the one who spoke for the events and told stories of the village during the donation time. This way, villagers especially the young people could often absorb the history from him via this channel. It was a shame that he said during the interview that he was gradually leaving the role as the main person in every activity because he wanted the younger generation to work as well. His role might be changed to be a consultant in the future.

